United Nations S/2006/370

Security Council

Distr.: General
9 June 2006

Original: English

Draft resolution

The Security Council,

Recalling its previous resolutions and statements by its president on the situation in Liberia and West Africa,

Welcoming the leadership of newly elected President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and her efforts to restore peace, security and harmony throughout Liberia,

Underscoring the continuing need for the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to support the Government of Liberia in building a stable environment that will allow democracy to flourish,

Recognizing the need for newly vetted and trained Liberian security forces to assume greater responsibility for national security, including policing, intelligence gathering, and executive protection,

Determining that, despite significant progress having been made in Liberia, the situation there continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region,

Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

1. *Decides* that the measures imposed by paragraph 2 (a) and (b) of resolution 1521 (2003) shall not apply to the weapons and ammunition already provided to members of the Special Security Service (SSS) for training purposes pursuant to advance approval under paragraph 2 (e) by the Committee established by paragraph 21 of that resolution and that those weapons and ammunition may remain in the custody of the SSS for unencumbered operational use;

2. *Further decides* that the measures imposed by paragraph 2 (a) and (b) of resolution 1521 (2003) shall not apply to limited supplies of weapons and ammunition, as approved in advance on a case-by-case basis by the Committee, intended for use by members of the Government of Liberia police and security forces who have been vetted and trained since the inception of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) in October 2003;

3. *Decides* that a request made in accordance with paragraph 2 shall be submitted to the Committee by the Government of Liberia and the exporting State, and, in case of approval, the Government of Liberia shall subsequently mark the weapons and ammunition, maintain a registry of them, and formally notify the Committee that these steps have been taken;

06-38510 (E) 130606

4. *Reiterates* the importance of UNMIL's continuing assistance to the Government of Liberia, the Committee established by paragraph 21 of resolution 1521 (2003) and the Panel of Experts, within its capabilities and areas of deployment, and without prejudice to its mandate, including in monitoring the implementation of the measures in paragraphs 2, 4, 6 and 10 of resolution 1521 (2003), and in this regard requests UNMIL to inspect inventories of weapons and ammunition obtained in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 2 above to ensure all such weapons and ammunition are accounted for, and to make periodic reports to the Committee established by paragraph 21 of resolution 1521 (2003) on its findings;

5. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

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Security Council

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Letter dated 1 June 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement regarding listing of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam as a terrorist organization, issued on 31 May 2006 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Gerhard **Pfanzelter**
Permanent Representative of Austria
to the United Nations

06-38134 (E) 130606

Annex to the letter dated 1 June 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English, French and Spanish]

Statement regarding listing of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam as a terrorist organization, issued on 31 March 2006 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union

1. The Council of the European Union (EU) decided on 29 May 2006 to include the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) on the EU list for the application of specific measures to combat terrorism. This list contains the names of persons, groups and entities against whom, for reasons of their involvement in terrorist acts, specific restrictive measures have to be taken, including:

- the freezing of funds and other financial assets or economic resources of the persons and entities specified;
- a ban on the provision of funds, financial assets and economic resources, and a ban on the provision of financial or other related services, directly or indirectly, for the benefit of these persons, groups and entities;
- police and judicial cooperation between EU member States.

2. The decision of the EU to list the LTTE should come as a surprise to nobody. Several warnings have already been provided to the LTTE, which the LTTE has systematically ignored. In its statement of 27 September 2005 (12669/1/05) the EU stated that "it was actively considering the formal listing of LTTE as a terrorist organization". The EU then called upon all parties to show commitment and responsibility towards the peace process and to refrain from actions that could endanger a peaceful resolution and political settlement of the conflict. Unfortunately, this appeal has gone unheeded. The decision of the EU to list the LTTE is based on the actions of that organization. The EU still sees a need for the LTTE to amend its violent course and return to peace talks, and will maintain its dialogue with the LTTE where such contacts, in the pursuit of the peace process, may help to bring about a return to negotiations and an end to violence. Listing the LTTE will not diminish the EU's determination to play its role as one of the Tokyo co-chairs.[1] The EU stresses that its decision is directed at the LTTE, and not at the Tamil people.

3. At the same time, the EU calls upon the Sri Lankan authorities to curb violence in Government controlled areas. In this regard, the EU stands by all of the findings in the reports of the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM). The EU urges the Government of Sri Lanka to act effectively on the commitment of President Rajapakse to put a stop to the culture of impunity and to clamp down on all acts of violence in areas controlled by the Government. The EU further urges the Government to ensure law and order for all citizens of Sri Lanka, and to investigate and prosecute all cases of violence that have so far not resulted in arrests or

[1] The Tokyo co-chairs are Japan, Norway, the United States of America and the European Union. They are so called because of their role in co-chairing the conference on "Reconstruction and Development of Sri Lanka", held in Tokyo on 9 and 10 June 2003.

convictions.

4. The upsurge in violence is not caused by the LTTE alone. The EU strongly urges the Sri Lankan authorities to curb violence in Government controlled areas. The EU notes with concern the growing number of reports of extrajudicial killings. The EU views the activities of the Karuna Group in the gravest possible light. These are clearly contributing to increased instability in Sri Lanka, and further endanger the peace process. The EU intends to keep the activities of the Karuna Group under close review, with a view to considering possible further steps.

5. The EU will keep the situation in Sri Lanka under active review, taking account of the activities of all parties to the conflict. It will remain ready to adopt further measures as and when they may be warranted by changing circumstances.

6. The European Union firmly believes that only a peacefully negotiated settlement can ensure a lasting solution acceptable to all. In this connection, the EU recalls the agreement reached in Oslo by all the parties involved to explore a specific institutional solution for Sri Lanka. It is the responsibility of all those concerned to act in the interests of all the people of Sri Lanka. The EU remains fully committed to the peace process in Sri Lanka. The EU sincerely urges all parties to put an end to violence and to return to the negotiation table, so as to relieve the Sri Lankan people from the ordeal of 20 years of persistent conflict.

7. The EU remains firmly committed to assisting the Norwegian facilitator in his work and to helping the two parties to the Ceasefire Agreement in Sri Lanka to resolve their conflicts and find a long-term peaceful settlement for Sri Lanka. This, however, requires real commitment to the peace process from both the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE. The EU clearly expects all parties to respect the role and physical safety of the SLMM monitors.

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Security Council

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9 June 2006

Original: English

Draft resolution

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions 955 (1994) of 8 November 1994, 1165 (1998) of 30 April 1998, 1329 (2000) of 30 November 2000, 1411 (2002) of 17 May 2002, 1431 (2002) of 14 August 2002, 1449 (2002) of 13 December 2002, 1503 (2003) of 28 August 2003 and 1534 (2004) of 26 March 2004,

Recalling that on 31 January 2003 the General Assembly by decision 57/414 A and in accordance with Article 12 bis, paragraph 1 (b) of the Statute of the International Tribunal for Rwanda, as amended, elected from a list of candidates approved by resolution 1449 (2002) of 13 December 2002, the following eleven judges to a four-year term of office at the International Tribunal beginning on 25 May 2003 and to end on 24 May 2007: Mr. Mansoor Ahmed (Pakistan); Mr. Sergei Alekseievich Egorov (Russian Federation); Mr. Asoka Zoysa Gunawardana (Sri Lanka); Mr. Mehmet Güney (Turkey); Mr. Erik Møse (Norway); Ms. Arlete Ramaroson (Madagascar); Mr. Jai Ram Reddy (Fiji); Mr. William Hussein Sekule (United Republic of Tanzania); Ms. Andrésa Vaz (Senegal); Ms. Inés Mónica Weinberg de Roca (Argentina) and Mr. Lloyd George Williams (Saint Kitts and Nevis),

Recalling that when Mr. Mansoor Ahmed resigned, the Secretary-General, after consultations with the Security Council and the General Assembly and in accordance with Article 12 bis, paragraph 2 of the Tribunal's Statute, appointed Ms. Khalida Rachid Khan of Pakistan effective as of 7 July 2003, for the remainder of Judge Ahmed's term of office,

Recalling that when Mr. Lloyd George Williams resigned, the Secretary-General after consultations with the Security Council and the General Assembly and in accordance with Article 12 bis, paragraph 2 of the Tribunal's Statute, appointed Sir Charles Michael Dennis Byron of Saint Kitts and Nevis effective as of 8 April 2004 for the remainder of Mr. Williams' term of office,

Recalling that when Mr. Asoka Zoysa Gunawardana resigned, the Secretary-General, after consultations with the Security Council and the General Assembly and in accordance with Article 12 bis, paragraph 2 of the Tribunal's Statute, appointed Mr. Asoka de Silva of Sri Lanka effective as of 2 August 2004 for the remainder of Mr. Gunawardana's term of office,

Taking note of the letter to the President of the Security Council from the Secretary-General dated 3 May 2006,

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Decides in response to the request by the Secretary-General and notwithstanding the provisions of Article 12 (bis), of the Statute of the International Tribunal for Rwanda, to extend the term of office of the following permanent judges of the International Tribunal at the Tribunal until 31 December 2008:

- Mr. Charles Michael Dennis Byron (Saint Kitts and Nevis)
- Mr. Asoka de Silva (Sri Lanka)
- Mr. Sergei Alekseievich Egorov (Russian Federation)
- Mr. Mehmet Güney (Turkey)
- Ms. Khalida Rachid Khan (Pakistan)
- Mr. Erik Møse (Norway)
- Ms. Arlete Ramaroson (Madagascar)
- Mr. Jai Ram Reddy (Fiji)
- Mr. William Hussein Sekule (United Republic of Tanzania)
- Ms. Andrésia Vaz (Senegal)
- Ms. Inés Mónica Weinberg de Roca (Argentina)

Requests States, to continue to make every effort to ensure that their nationals who serve as permanent judges of the International Tribunal for Rwanda, remain available to serve in their positions until 31 December 2008.

United Nations S/2006/373

Security Council

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9 June 2006

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Draft resolution

The Security Council,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force of 1 June 2006 (S/2006/333), and also reaffirming its resolution 1308 (2000) of 17 July 2000,

1. *Calls upon* the parties concerned to implement immediately its resolution 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973;

2. *Welcomes* the efforts being undertaken by the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force to implement the Secretary-General's zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and to ensure full compliance of its personnel with the United Nations code of conduct, *requests* the Secretary-General to continue to take all necessary action in this regard and to keep the Security Council informed, and *urges* troop-contributing countries to take preventive and disciplinary action to ensure that such acts are properly investigated and punished in cases involving their personnel;

3. *Decides* to renew the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force for a period of six months, that is, until 31 December 2006;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit, at the end of this period, a report on developments in the situation and the measures taken to implement resolution 338 (1973).

06-38523 (E) 130606

United Nations A/ES-10/336–S/2006/374

General Assembly
Security Council

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9 June 2006

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General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-first year

Identical letters dated 8 June 2006 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Just three days ago, the Palestinian people regrettably marked their thirty-ninth year of life under the brutal, belligerent military occupation of Israel, the occupying Power. Throughout the past 39 years and continuing today, the occupying Power has been relentless in its systematic denial and gross violation of the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and its grave violation of all other norms and rules of international law, including international humanitarian law, as it has continued its military campaign of lethal aggression, State terrorism and war crimes against the civilian population under its occupation.

This horrifying pattern of violations by the Israeli occupying forces continues to cause severe suffering and hardships for the Palestinian people, who are currently enduring a prolonged humanitarian crisis, and continues to fuel rising tensions and instability on the ground. The short period of time since our last letter to you has been no exception. In fact, the occupying Power has, inter alia, continued to carry out military attacks against Palestinians, to arrest and detain hundreds more civilians, to destroy Palestinian property, to expand its illegal settlements, to construct the unlawful wall and to impose more than 500 checkpoints and roadblocks throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, seriously restricting freedom of movement and suffocating the economic and social life of the Palestinian people.

For example, in the past week, the Israeli occupying forces continued to launch missile air strikes against "targets" in the Occupied Palestinian Territory in densely populated civilian areas, directly intended to kill Palestinian civilians; i.e., the occupying Power continued to commit extrajudicial executions. In this regard, on 5 June 2006, the occupying forces deliberately launched an air strike against a car in the Jabaliya refugee camp in the northern Gaza Strip, killing Imad Mohammad Assaliya and Majdi Tayseer Hammad and wounding three other people.

06-38153 (E) 120606

On 7 June, the occupying forces, using artillery bombardment, attacked a national security post east of Gaza city, killing four Palestinian men.

Moreover, the Israeli occupying forces continued to raid Palestinian cities and villages to carry out military and arrest operations. On 31 May 2006, Israeli soldiers stormed the Balata refugee camp east of the city of Nablus, shooting and wounding two Palestinian children in an operation to arrest six other Palestinians in the camp, including two women. A series of arrests has also been carried out in the Qalqilya, Jenin, al-Khalil (Hebron), Bethlehem and Ramallah areas, typically with no information given to the families of those detained as to their whereabouts or conditions. The Israeli occupying forces also continued to restrict the movement of ambulances treating wounded and sick civilians, and even continued to fire upon ambulances during the recent period, including shooting at an ambulance on 27 May 2006, which was carrying a woman in labour, destroying the vehicle's engine, terrorizing the woman and further delaying her arrival to hospital for delivery of her infant.

At the same time, Israel, the occupying Power, has continued its illegal colonial settlement campaign, building and expanding settlements throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and constructing more "Israeli-only" bypass roads on confiscated Palestinian land. In fact, just days ago, on 2 June 2006, the occupying Power laid the foundations for a new settlement, intended to be called "Maskiot", in the Jordan Valley. In addition, the occupying Power continues to illegally construct the wall on the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to impose its unlawful, discriminatory permit system, in total disregard of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, international law and resolutions of the United Nations.

All these ongoing Israeli violations and grave breaches are taking place at a time during which the Palestinian leadership is exerting full efforts on all fronts to promote calm through a national dialogue aimed at achieving reconciliation and unity among all Palestinian parties and groups and broad support for the two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on the rules and principles of international law, United Nations resolutions, the terms of reference of the peace process, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet road map. Clearly, in this regard, Israeli's continuing military aggressions and violations against the Palestinian people not only further destabilize the situation on the ground and increase tensions, but they also undermine such crucial efforts by the Palestinian leadership.

The international community cannot continue to remain on the sidelines while such violations continue. Indeed, efforts should be exerted to bring a halt to these violations and the continued suffering of the Palestinian people and to promote stability in the Occupied Palestinian People during this very critical period as part of the overall aim — to which the international community has repeatedly affirmed its commitment — to promote genuine resumption of the peace process towards the achievement of a just and lasting peace settlement.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 244 letters to you regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. these letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 30 May 2006 (A/ES-10/335-S/2006/347), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, State

terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

Accordingly, in follow-up to the above-mentioned letters, I regret to inform you that, in the few days since my last letter to you, at least seven more Palestinian civilians have been killed by the Israeli occupying forces, raising the total number of martyrs killed since September 2000 to 3,887. (The names of the martyrs who have been identified are listed in the annex to the present letter.)

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine of the United Nations

Annex to the identical letters dated 8 June 2006 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Names of martyrs killed by the Israeli occupying forces in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem*

(Thursday, 1 June 2006, to Thursday, 8 June 2006)

Thursday, 1 June 2006

1. Ahmad Youssef Sari

Monday, 5 June 2006

1. Imad Mohammad Assaliya
2. Majdi Tayseer Hammad

Wednesday, 7 June 2006

1. Khedr Qassem
2. Eyad Hammad Abu Sela'a
3. Anwar Sa'oud Abu Sela'a

Thursday, 8 June 2006

1. Marwan Abdel Rahman Al-Da'oudi (died of wounds sustained on 7 June 2006)

* The total number of Palestinian martyrs killed by the Israeli occpying forces since 28 September 2000 is 3,887.

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Security Council

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10 June 2006

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Letter dated 10 June 2006 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the fourth report of the International Independent Investigation Commission, which was prepared pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1595 (2005), 1636 (2005) and 1644 (2005) (see annex).

The report details the progress made by the Commission, since its previous report dated 14 March 2006 (S/2006/161) in investigating the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and 22 other victims, and in providing technical assistance to the Lebanese authorities in their investigation of the 14 other cases. In particular, the report highlights the considerable progress made in consolidating the Commission's investigative capacity and organizational structure; developing its investigative activities; and adapting its internal procedures to the standards and requirements of a future judicial process, possibly a tribunal of an international character. The report again underscores the Commission's methodological and standard-based approach to the implementation of its mandate, as set out in the above-mentioned resolutions.

I wish to thank the staff of the Commission for their dedicated and systematic work in difficult circumstances. I also wish to thank Mr. Brammertz for his continued leadership in advancing the investigation of the attack. In particular, I welcome the partnership he has developed with the Lebanese judicial and law enforcement agencies. I share the view expressed by Mr. Brammertz and the Government of Lebanon that the Commission should be provided with stability and predictability in its mandate and resources.

I should be grateful if you would bring this matter to the attention of the members of the Security Council. Meanwhile, I am transmitting the report to the Government of Lebanon.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

06-38259 (E) 130606

Annex

Fourth report of the International Independent Investigation Commission established pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1595 (2005), 1636 (2005) and 1644 (2005)

Serge Brammertz
Commissioner

Beirut
10 June 2006

Summary

The Security Council requested the International Independent Investigation Commission to report to it on the progress of the inquiry, including on the cooperation received from the Syrian authorities, every three months from the adoption of resolution 1644 (2005) of 15 December 2005.

The present report highlights the further progress made by the Commission in strengthening its organizational structure and capacity, developing its investigative activities and adapting its internal procedures to the standards and requirements of a future judicial process, possibly before a tribunal of an international character. In particular, the Commission has reviewed all previously collected information and is investigating systematically all possible leads. It currently features 24 investigation projects, covering a wide range of areas. Evidentiary materials of already completed investigative projects are being stored in an organized and systematic fashion, ready to be accessed by the relevant judicial authorities.

In terms of the technical assistance it provides to the Lebanese authorities in the 14 other cases, the Commission believes that a more concerted and robust effort is needed to move the investigation forward; and while increased international assistance is necessary to strengthen the necessary technical and investigative capacities of the Lebanese investigative authorities, the Commission could conceive of a more proactive role for itself in pursuing these investigations.

The cooperation it receives from Member States has become an ever more important condition for the completion of the Commission's work. 32 requests to 13 States have been submitted during the reporting period, highlighting the wide international reach of the investigation. Cooperation with the Syrian Arab Republic has developed further. The Commission will continue to request the full cooperation of the Syrian Arab Republic, including in collecting documents, seeking specific information and facilitating the interviews of Syrian citizens.

The Commission welcomes the request of the Government of Lebanon to the Secretary-General dated 4 May 2006 to extend its mandate for a further period of up to one year. Such extension would provide a sense of continuity and stability, enable progressive operations and planning and offer assurances to staff.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1644 (2005) of 15 December 2005, in which the Council requested the United Nations International Independent Investigation Commission to report to the Council on the progress of the inquiry every three months, including on the cooperation received from the Syrian authorities. It covers the progress made in implementing the Commission's mandate, as laid out in Security Council resolutions 1595 (2005), 1636 (2005) and 1644 (2005), since its previous report dated 14 March 2006 (S/2006/161).

2. In keeping with the methodology outlined in its previous report, the Commission has continued its systematic and standard-based approach to the investigation of the killing of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and 22 others (Hariri investigation) and its provision of technical assistance to the Lebanese authorities in their investigation of the 14 other cases. In particular, the Commission has made progress in strengthening its organizational structure and capacity; developing its investigative activities; and adapting its internal procedures to the standards and requirements of a future judicial process, possibly before a tribunal of an international character.

3. The organizational consolidation of the Commission following the expansion of its mandate in December 2005 and the appointment of a new Commissioner in January 2006 has progressed. While still not at full capacity, most of the Commission's key positions are now filled or under recruitment, most notably in the investigation division. As a result, the previous vacancy rate of almost 50 per cent has been reduced to less than 20 per cent. Finding qualified international language staff, however, remains one of the main challenges in this respect. Also, the urgently needed expansion of the main operating base to accommodate the growing number of staff is moving forward. Lastly, the Commission has commenced negotiations with the Government of Lebanon to further clarify its legal status through a supplemental memorandum of understanding that would augment the original memorandum of 13 June 2005.

4. Already, the increased number of investigators, lawyers and analysts has allowed the Commission to make steady progress in the Hariri investigation on a broad front. Presently, 24 concurrent investigation and analysis projects are under way, covering the full array of investigative work in such areas as forensic

examinations of exhibits and seized items; investigations of the crime scene and convoy; experiments and simulations; telecommunications; organizational structures; linkage investigations and analysis; and interviewing of key witnesses and sensitive sources. Each project is covered by a multidisciplinary task team, comprising experts equipped with the appropriate skill set for each respective project.

5. In particular, the Commission has mounted extensive and systematic forensic examinations of the immediate circumstances that led to the killing of Mr. Hariri and 22 others. For instance, just recently, it completed a 23-day forensic investigation of the crime scene and the remnants of the convoy vehicles of Mr. Hariri. It has also received forensic simulations, such as 3-D models and 2-D animations and sound blast recordings, to help establish a comprehensive picture of the crime scene on the day and at the exact time of the explosion. Also during the reporting period, the Commission undertook DNA analysis, computer forensic investigations, fingerprints research, telephone analysis and documents examination. More forensic examinations are ongoing or will become necessary in the future. For example, a comprehensive forensic inventory and database of all exhibits currently in the possession of both the Lebanese authorities and the Commission will be created.

6. As far as the Commission's expanded mandate is concerned, namely to extend technical assistance to the Lebanese authorities in 14 other cases, progress has been made by carrying out several comparative analyses. By comparing the modus operandi and possible motives of each case, a working hypothesis has been developed that groups the cases into two clusters of eight explosions in public locations and six attacks directly targeting specific individuals. This comparison will facilitate conclusions concerning the nature of the perpetrators and enable the identification of possible linkages with the Hariri case. It has also become apparent that only a concerted effort to boost the resources and capacity of the Lebanese judicial and law enforcement authorities, and possibly a more proactive role for the Commission in the investigation of the 14 cases, will ultimately lead to any tangible progress in the development of these cases.

7. During the reporting period, the Commission has also determined its own set of internal procedures, as provided in paragraph 6 of Security Council resolution 1595 (2005). It facilitates further standardization of the investigative work of the Commission and ensures due respect for applicable legal and professional standards. The procedure has, for example, standardized the conduct of interviews of witnesses and suspects, taking into account Lebanese law and relevant international standards, including international criminal procedure, so as to prepare for future legal proceedings before a tribunal, possibly of an international character. The procedure has also standardized the Commission's requests for assistance to Member States. All requests for assistance now follow a consistent format and are being recorded, monitored and followed up within the time frames requested. This facilitates an objective assessment of the cooperation that the Commission receives from requested Member States.

8. The cooperation of Member States has become an ever more important element of the Commission's work. 32 requests to 13 States have been submitted during the reporting period, highlighting the wide international reach of the investigation. Cooperation with the Syrian Arab Republic has developed further and

meetings have been held with the President and Vice-President. Several other requests for specific information, documents and facilitation of witness interviews were met in a timely and generally satisfactory manner. Also, working-level meetings with senior representatives of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic are now being held regularly, both in Damascus and Beirut, to discuss the practical modalities of such cooperation. The Commission has received the repeated assurances of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic that all Commission requests will be met in a timely and satisfactory manner, and that the Syrian Arab Republic wishes to play an active role in supporting the Commission's search for the perpetrators of the crimes.

9. Considerable progress has been made in building a solid organization capable of meeting the significant investigative, analytical, security, translation and interpretation, and other challenges associated with its mandate. Nonetheless, sustaining an undertaking of such complexity over an extended period of time remains a critical focus of the Commission's work. Certainty of mandate and predictability of financial, human and other resources are the backbone of any organizational growth. They constitute the underpinning of the systematic and methodological approach advocated in the Commission's previous report. The Commission thus welcomes the request of the Government of Lebanon to the Secretary-General dated 4 May 2006 to extend its mandate for a further period of up to one year. Such an extension would provide a sense of continuity and stability, guarantee steady operations and planning, and offer assurances to staff.

II. Progress in the investigation

10. During the reporting period, the Commission's investigative focus has been on completing the consolidation of inherited work, continuing the investigation of ongoing aspects of the crime, developing numerous new leads and areas of the investigation and putting systems in place that ensure appropriate management of the investigation. The imperative remains to achieve realistic evidential results in the quickest possible time frame.

11. In the present section, the Commission reviews its ongoing work on the key layers of the case: the crime itself; the identification of those who committed it or had knowledge of the operation or planning of it; and the identification of those who commissioned it. In so doing, the Commission provides as much detail as possible while respecting the underlying need to preserve confidentiality and investigative leads.

A. Properties of the crime

1. Working parameters

12. As indicated in the previous report, one of the investigation's primary focuses has been the establishment of a unifying theory on whether the explosion of the improvised explosive device (IED) that killed former Prime Minister Hariri and 22 others occurred "below ground" or "above ground", consisted of one or two blasts, or was triggered by any potential combination of those factors. Systematically and conclusively, examining and establishing those fundamental aspects of the crime is

essential to facilitate further progress in the investigation and satisfy the evidential standards of a future judicial process.

13. Knowledge of the number of explosions and exact location of the IED at the moment of explosion would facilitate a better understanding of the planning and execution of the crime; the nature and composition of the perpetrating team; the skills and coordination required; the time spent to plan the attack; the period during which the decision to kill Mr. Hariri was taken; and the extent of involvement, potential advance knowledge or complicity of other individuals.

14. The importance of comprehensive forensic work in advancing the investigation should be emphasized. Forensic examination and analysis provide the basis for many other investigative steps, case hypotheses and establishment of evidence. While the Commission acknowledges the excellent work undertaken by previous forensic teams, it believes that further forensic work was and remains necessary.

2. Forensic exploitation of the crime scene

15. The Commission has undertaken extensive baseline investigative steps to clarify the explosion aspects of the crime, including the collection and corroboration of witness information. It has also undertaken comprehensive forensic tests, some of which remain ongoing. This will enable the Commission to conclude, to a satisfactory evidential level, the circumstances of the explosion on the day.

16. A team of forensic and crime scene experts began the Commission's final forensic exploitation of the crime scene in late May 2006. The objective of the project was to conduct systematic investigations on the crime scene and collect forensic evidence, including to establish whether the Mitsubishi truck was used to deliver the bomb, whether the device was detonated by an individual and the exact location of the device when it exploded. In addition, the project sought to collect forensic evidence to demonstrate the exact circumstances of the detonation: whether the explosion occurred above ground or below ground and whether a second bomb was detonated at almost the same time. The project required the careful examination of tons of debris, metal and plastic fragments within an area of 41,000 m^2.

17. The final crime scene exploitation also aimed at conducting DNA analysis of recovered human remains. This will assist in the identification of the individual who initiated the IED and any victims of the attack. The project also sought to confirm existing and developing new investigation leads regarding the planning and execution of the operation. Altogether, the effort has produced over 1,900 additional exhibits, all of which are undergoing further forensic examination.

18. In addition, in March 2006 the Commission completed the forensic examination of the vehicles of the Hariri convoy. It laid out the vehicles in their approximate positions immediately prior to the blast. The objective of that exercise was to investigate the effects of the explosion on the vehicles and to seek further evidence. A total of 76 samples of widely dispersed metal fragments, embedded in the vehicles at varying heights above the ground, were collected. Due to their size, shape and physical state, it is likely that the fragments originated from the explosives container (i.e., the Mitsubishi truck) or a metallic object in the close vicinity of the IED.

19. The fragments have been submitted to metallographic and forensic paint analysis to determine their origin. Trajectory analysis will be undertaken to

determine the exact location of the IED, and to establish whether the pieces originated from the container and the direction of the fragments in the moments immediately after the explosion. The results will be compared to the analysis of the properties of the two potential IED locations, above ground or below ground, to assist in establishing the 3-D position of the IED immediately before it exploded.

Characteristics of the explosion

20. As noted above, whether the explosion occurred above ground or below ground or a combination of both is a priority for the Commission. The properties of an above-ground or below-ground explosion differ considerably in terms of the characteristics of the crater; the trajectory and nature of the debris; and the effects and characteristics of the blast, such as the fireball, thermal effects and impact on surrounding buildings. The Commission's extensive forensic work will allow it to establish which of the above-mentioned properties apply to the explosion in the Hariri case.

21. To obtain additional clarity on the various theories surrounding the properties of the blast, a final analysis of seismological data resulting from the blast is under way. The results will help to corroborate other forms of evidence regarding the issue of whether one or two blasts occurred, the power of the explosion and the quantity of explosives used, as well as to assess whether the blast occurred above or below ground. One reason for acquiring such data has been to determine the precise time of the blast, which has been set at 1255.05 hours. The confusion about the precise time of the blast was related to the inaccurately set clock on the closed circuit (CCTV) of the HSBC Bank. A comparative analysis will also be conducted of other blasts that have occurred in Lebanon relative to the magnitude of the blast that killed Mr. Hariri on 14 February 2005.

22. The forensic, physical and chemical properties of explosions that are attributed to an above-ground or below-ground IED explosion have been closely examined with the Hariri case in mind. They relate to the nature of the fireball and the associated thermal properties; the trajectories and distances of blast-related debris from the container or carrier of the device, from the ground and from those human remains associated with the carrier, the convoy and the vicinity; the effects of the blast wave from the perspective of the victims and the nearby structures; the physical properties of the crater and surrounding area prior to and after the explosion; the sound wave factors in relation to the experience and evidence of witnesses when the explosion occurred; the seismic vibrations registered upon explosion; and the additional complications of blast wave and air shock dynamics arising from the surrounding urban environment.

23. The crater formed by the blast is a particularly important forensic area for exploitation. It has now been established that the amount of explosives necessary to form a crater similar to that created by the attack on 14 February 2005 would be approximately 500 kg of TNT equivalent, at a depth of 1.7 m under the ground; 1,200 kg of TNT equivalent if the IED was placed above the ground; or 1,800 kg of TNT equivalent if the IED was approximately 0.80 m above the ground. Thus, if the Mitsubishi truck was indeed used as the container for the explosives, the amount of explosives employed should have been at least 1,200 kg of TNT equivalent.

24. Moreover, evidence collected from within the soil on the inside of the crater indicates that the IED was most probably located above the ground since the

explosion drove it downwards into the ground. All fragments collected in this area will be subjected to trajectory analysis and integrated into other trajectory findings so as to establish, in a 3-D 360-degree model, the exact location of the IED before its detonation. An examination of the underground systems within the road and its environs was also conducted and no traces of any part of an initiating device were found.

25. In this context, the Commission is still examining exactly how the explosives would have had to be placed on the truck to achieve the intended effects and how they must have been wired to detonate in the way they eventually did. This will help to determine whether any signature methods were used in the creation of the IED and what level of expertise was needed to assemble the device.

The container for the explosives

26. As noted above, the various vehicle parts recovered during the forensic examination of the crime scene are currently undergoing biological and other forensic analysis and identification so as to establish their origin, in particular whether they belong to the Mitsubishi truck, referred to in the Commission's previous reports. One piece of metal, possibly a roof of a vehicle, was retrieved from the arm of the crane attached to a building at the crime scene (Byblos building), approximately 50 m above the ground. Also, an ignition key device was collected adjacent to a building that had previously not been forensically exploited.

27. Moreover, the gearing mechanism of a vehicle was found embedded in the ground inside the crater, some 40 cm below the surface. It is also undergoing trajectory and forensic analysis to establish the properties of the vehicle from which it may have originated. Preliminary assessments indicate that this mechanism was driven into the ground of the crater by an explosion from above.

Human remains

28. A total of 119 possible biological exhibits were recovered from many different locations around the crime scene. Upon preliminary examination, at least 44 are confirmed human remains and a minimum of another 12 pieces are expected to be confirmed as human remains once forensic examinations have been completed. They are also currently undergoing identification, DNA and trajectory analysis. In matching existing DNA with any newly established DNA profiles, the Commission will work closely with the Lebanese forensic authorities.

Convoy route

29. A systematic project of interviewing or re-interviewing all members of Mr. Hariri's security staff, including the surviving members of his convoy, those managing his security and those in his immediate personal staff, is nearing completion. The objectives are to clarify the convoy's route; the exact timing of its progress; stop and start times; timing and knowledge of route selection; the utilization of one or more Mercedes Benz 600 vehicles in the convoy both on the day of the attack and before; patterns of when the route passing the St. George Hotel was previously selected, including for the previous visit to Parliament on 8 February 2005; the utilization of electronic countermeasures and their exact capability; the perpetrators' overall plan; the point and timing of introduction of the Mitsubishi

truck, the details of the last two days of Mr. Hariri's life; and the weaknesses and strengths of the security panoply which surrounded him during that period.

30. Concurrently, a map with 2-D animations of the movement of the convoy on the day of the attack has been created and linked with aerial pictures and videos to visualize exactly in real time the movement of the convoy along its route.

31. Considering the nature of the convoy route and the need to introduce the Mitsubishi truck into that route, the Commission is not yet fully satisfied that the immediate area of the St. George Hotel was, indeed, intended to be the specific location of the attack. It is possible that the plan foresaw a "rolling" attack, with the detonation of the IED planned to take place further along the route of the convoy, probably beyond the St. George Hotel, but almost certainly not before reaching it due to logistical and timing issues. For this reason, the Commission is also continuing its review of CCTV footage recorded on the day of the attack and continuing to seek footage of the projected route of the Mitsubishi truck that may have been archived.

3. Crime scene witnesses

32. A series of systematic interviews and re-interviews of over 25 crime scene witnesses is under way and will be correlated with the extensive forensic work. The objective is among other things to establish the exact movements and positioning of the Mitsubishi truck at the final stages of the operation; to establish a commonality of understanding of events at the time of the explosion; to develop additional investigative leads; and to clarify whether two sounds were heard and two IEDs used. A blast/sound wave analysis is being conducted to identify the aural properties of the blast relative to the location of each witness at the scene, which will allow the forensic determination and testimonial corroboration of whether there were one or two blasts.

4. Preliminary conclusion

33. On the basis of the extensive witness and forensic evidence collected and reviewed to date and pending the results of a series of ongoing interviews and final forensic analysis, the Commission is of the view that one above-ground explosion occurred on the day of the attack at 1255:05 hours. It was caused by a very large IED, containing a minimum of 1,200 kg of TNT equivalent and comprising a mix of TNT, PETN and/or RDX plastic explosive.

34. On the basis of the physical evidence collected, including trajectories and locations of recovered metal fragments, damage inflicted on the vehicles of the convoy and those parked on the road and visual identification from the HSBC CCTV footage, the Commission also believes that the Mitsubishi truck contained the IED, which was activated when the Hariri convoy drove by. This finding is subject to final forensic results.

35. The detonation of the IED was most probably initiated by an individual within or immediately in front of the truck. The 27 parts of human remains recovered previously at the crime scene have been identified as belonging to the same person, a male. It is likely that he was the individual initiating the IED, in part because his remains are very small in size and were recovered in the same area, all in the same forward direction from the epicentre of the blast. At this stage, the Commission

prefers not to describe the person as a "suicide bomber". It remains to be established whether the person detonated the device willingly or was coerced into doing so.

36. The amount of explosives used appears to have been calculated to ensure the success of the operation, taking into consideration the area selected for the attack and the necessary proximity and accuracy of the Mitsubishi truck's position in relation to the Hariri vehicle. With the charge estimated as having been a minimum of 1,200 kg of TNT equivalent, the attack was elevated to almost "guarantee level".

37. Given that the crime must be considered a targeted assassination, it would have been necessary to overcome both technical defences, such as jamming devices in the convoy, and the human flaws of the plan. The high amount of explosives was chosen to ensure success even if the Hariri vehicle was not directly hit but was at some distance from the actual device. It was designed so as to ensure that the killing radius of the shock and pressure wave emanating from the magnitude of the blast would kill Mr. Hariri even if he were not killed by the actual immediate explosion, the associated high velocity fragmentation of the vehicle and other physical objects or the fireball created by the explosion.

B. Individuals involved in the commission of the crime

1. Working hypotheses

38. As indicated in its last report, the Commission distinguishes between three types of involvement in committing the Hariri attack, without thereby suggesting a specific intent or criminal liability: persons who participated in the perpetration of the attack; persons who had knowledge of the operation or the planning thereof; and persons who commissioned the crime. Depending on the degree of interconnection of these three categories of persons, the Commission has developed two basic working hypotheses, as described below.

39. On the one hand, the operation could have been planned and conducted by applying the principle of compartmentalization. This would mean a complex operation, broken down into its constituent parts and conducted by individuals or groups unaware of other aspects of the operation or other participants involved in it. For example, it is possible that the acquisition, preparation and delivery of the IED to the crime scene were undertaken by persons not involved in the planning or execution of the attack. Similarly, preparation and delivery of the Ahmed Abu Adass tape could have been performed by persons not otherwise involved. Under this hypothesis, a larger number of persons may have participated or had some knowledge of at least one aspect of the plan or operation.

40. On the other hand, one single team alone might have conceived of the idea to kill former Prime Minister Hariri, conducted the reconnaissance and surveillance, prepared the videotape claiming responsibility, acquired the explosives, acquired and prepared the Mitsubishi truck, used an individual as the trigger mechanism, and executed the operation. Under this hypothesis, the number of participants may have been relatively small.

2. Individuals participating in the attack

Modus operandi employed by the perpetrators

41. In the previous report, the Commission outlined its overall investigative approach to elucidating the preparatory work of the attack; identifying those who participated and their respective tasks, including what those tasks entailed before, during and after the attack; and clarifying the overall modus operandi employed by the perpetrators.

42. In order to clarify the modus operandi, the Commission has interviewed witnesses, victims and suspects; used forensic investigation and expertise in the assessment of its means and methods; and integrated with these the analysis of communications patterns, both on the day and in the lead-up to the crime.

43. The Commission is continuing its investigations along the above-mentioned lines in order to further develop its understanding of the operation of the crime: how, when and where a group of persons gathered for elements of the operation; how, when and where reconnaissance operations were undertaken to prepare for the attack; how communications were used or not used, to precise effect and with a high degree of discipline, in the conduct of the operation, the procurement and planning stages and even after the event; and if and when knowledge of Mr. Hariri's route was obtained in order for the plan to be constructed.

44. In this context, the Commission continues to investigate whether the driver of the Mitsubishi truck was an integral part of the team or a later addition just prior to the actual attack; the identity of the individual initiating the IED and whether the individual was a willing or coerced participant in the crime; how many people committed the attack and how many facilitated it; who else had contact with the team in the weeks, days and hours leading up to the attack; which entities have the capability and capacity to undertake an attack of such complexity in the manner it was executed; where the explosives came from; who had the knowledge and capacity to build the IED and when, where and by whom it was actually built; and how the vehicle was delivered to the crime scene.

45. Finally, the Commission, jointly with the Lebanese Prosecutor General's office, is continuing its investigations into the sourcing, nature of acquisition and movements of the Mitsubishi truck between the time of its acquisition and its use in the attack, as a priority line of enquiry. In particular, the truck acquisition represents a key aspect of the case, enabling a better understanding of the modus operandi of the team that perpetrated the attack.

The individual initiating the IED detonation

46. As indicated earlier, the identity and manner of participation of the individual initiating the detonation of the IED, either from within or close to the front of the Mitsubishi truck, are key aspects of the investigation. Consequently, the Commission is focusing on whether the individual had been an integral part of the team preparing and executing the attack or rather was integrated into the operation just prior to the actual attack.

47. In this context, it will be important to determine the intent for that individual's participation and whether it was based on an act of volition or coercion. Each alternative would lead to different conclusions in terms of motives for the operation,

this requires intricate knowledge of the motives, means, and methods of "suicide bombing" in the region. DNA and comparative analysis is under way, with the Commission looking locally, regionally and further afield for matches to the DNA of the individual suspected of having initiated the IED. This will possibly allow the Commission to determine the geographic origin of the individual.

48. The validity of the claim of responsibility in the videotaped message of Ahmed Abu Adass is of particular relevance in the Commission's effort to establish the identity and participation of the individual initiating the IED. The Commission is examining the religious and political aspects of the videotaped pronouncement as well as the means by which it was delivered, including how, when and by whom. It is also investigating the five associated telephone calls to *Reuters* and *Al Jazeera* following the attack, two of which claimed responsibility for the attack and three of which were related to the tape that was provided. Experts are being consulted to enable the Commission to clarify certain issues arising from this aspect of the crime.

49. Forensic analysis and media forensic analysis is under way on those aspects of the tape in which Ahmed Abu Adass claims responsibility for the attack, on other associated items and on the physical modalities of delivering the message. The collection of fingerprints and DNA research has been performed and is being matched against the fingerprints and DNA profiles of Ahmed Abu Adass and others. Also, a computer forensic examination of the computer of Ahmed Abu Adass is being conducted, the results of which will be analysed. A number of interviews of relevant persons have been conducted in connection with this aspect of the case.

50. At this stage, as a result of extensive forensic analysis and other information and evidence collected to date and pending final DNA results from recently collected evidence at the crime scene, there is no evidence to suggest that Ahmed Abu Adass is the individual who initiated the detonation of the IED, as stated in his claim of responsibility. Nor is there any evidence to suggest that Ahmed Abu Adass was present at the crime scene, in any capacity, on 14 February 2005. The Commission does not exclude the possibility that he was involved in other aspects of the operation beyond his participation in the making of the videotaped message claiming responsibility.

Communications traffic

51. Communications analysis is a major task, with the collection of up to 5 billion records by the Commission currently under way. All must be sifted, sorted, collated and analysed. This work is painstaking in its depth, with any linkage established almost exponentially generating further linkages. The Commission has devoted a project team of analysts and investigators to this task and is acquiring specialized software and hardware to accommodate the project requirements. Such traffic analysis work requires focus. Hence, the Commission is concentrating on the immediacy of the Hariri case and closely associated links with the operation and other relevant issues, and the results of this work are continuously integrated into the broader case components.

52. The traffic and intercept analysis has expanded beyond the immediate utilization of the six subscriber identity module (SIM) cards, referred to in the Commission's previous reports, on the day of the attack. Complex linkages, associated calls and geographic locations of a broader time period are being scrutinized and added to the overall investigation findings. The communications

currently under analysis also have an international dimension, although the Commission is not in a position to make final conclusions about the significance of such calls at this stage.

3. Persons with knowledge of the operation or its planning

53. The investigation aims not only to understand the modus operandi of the team that prepared and executed the attack, but also establish who else may have had knowledge of the crime. Indeed, it is important to determine precisely who, other than the perpetrators, possessed knowledge of the operation, its planning or other parts thereof. Identifying and interviewing those individuals could provide important information and evidence pertaining to the crime.

4. Persons who commissioned the crime

Motives for the attack

54. While advancing its knowledge of the properties of the crime and the persons involved in its perpetration, the Commission is also examining a number of different motives for the murder of former Prime Minister Hariri. The Commission appreciates the possibility that there may have been more than one reason for wanting to kill Mr. Hariri. It is not examining one factor alone; rather, it is also investigating hypotheses for a number of factors that may have come together at one time or another, thus multiplying the motives of the persons who commissioned the crime. Each hypothesis varies in its complexity; some are multilayered and others relatively straightforward. Given Mr. Hariri's numerous activities and prominent positions, the Commission is investigating political motives, personal vendettas, financial circumstances and extremist ideologies, as well as any combination of those factors, in developing its hypotheses regarding the possible motives of the persons who commissioned the crime.

55. The Commission is still examining possible political reasons and imperatives as a motivation for the assassination of Mr. Hariri. In this respect, it is of the utmost importance for the Commission to obtain intricate inside knowledge of the political circumstances prevailing in Lebanon and the wider region at the time of the attack. Of particular importance is the functioning of the political, military, security and civilian organizations and hierarchies in Lebanon, and how and by whom decisions were made from both the de jure and de facto perspectives.

56. The Commission is still considering the assumption that the situation following the collapse of the Al Madina Bank was a contributing factor to Mr. Hariri's killing. While there has been much open-source speculation concerning the collapse of the Bank, the Commission believes that it is necessary to establish facts surrounding this assumption, including the possibility that funds from the Bank may have been channelled to finance the operation. However, the Commission will not divert resources into a broader pursuit of Al Madina matters.

57. The Commission is also examining the possibility that a single group, with a singular intent and capacity, committed the crime. For example, the Commission is continuing to develop its knowledge of individuals who are or have been in the custody of the Lebanese authorities, allegedly as members of terrorist groups. This area of its investigations remains ongoing and is focusing on the links, intent, capacity and motivations of those individuals.

58. Conversely, the Commission is examining multilayered concepts that envisage disparate individuals or groups with different motives and intents joining together to commit the same crime.

Collection of evidence

59. In this context, the Commission is continuing to conduct a series of interviews with individuals who can assist in laying out the formal and informal structures that were apparent in Lebanon at the time of Mr. Hariri's killing, including interviews with Syrian and Lebanese officials from a number of different organizations and agencies, as well as other relevant individuals who are not part of such organizational structures. The Commission believes this process will remain ongoing for an extended period.

60. In searching for motives, the Commission is continuing to conduct political analysis, develop macro-timelines of numerous themes and topics, reconstruct events, examine the content of meetings and analyse conversations and documents. This aspect of the Commission's work involves many forms of evidence identification, utilizing witness testimony, technical information, forensic data, documentation, expert testimony and open sources. Establishing evidential links between the person or persons who commissioned the crime and the act itself is an extremely complex undertaking.

III. Technical assistance in the 14 other cases

61. In line with its mandate as expanded by Security Council resolution 1644 (2005), the Commission has continued to provide technical assistance to the Lebanese authorities in the 14 cases outlined in its last report. The Commission has dedicated a full-time multidisciplinary project team to this task, comprising legal, investigative, analytical, forensic and communications expertise. The team works closely with the Prosecutor General's office and the investigative judges assigned to the 14 cases.

62. The Commission's focus during the reporting period has been on advancing both the status of each case individually and that of all cases horizontally so as to establish potential links between the attacks. As a result, the 14 cases are now better understood in terms of the profile of each attack, the current stage of their investigation and the steps needed to strengthen and accelerate the investigation process.

63. Specifically, the Commission has provided technical assistance to the Lebanese authorities, including by providing lists of questions to be asked of witnesses, requesting the collection of and examining CCTV footage in several cases, requesting certain witnesses to be re-interviewed and examining communications records. From a forensic perspective, the Commission is conducting DNA profiling of biological samples, undertaking an analysis of the available forensic reports for the cases and comparing analysis of the seismological data from all 14 explosions.

A. Status of the 14 cases

64. Analysis of the cases through the prism of their modus operandi has established the general pattern that explosive devices were used in all cases, without any evidence of alternative means being utilized. Moreover, it leads the Commission to discern three specific methods of attack: the use of car bombs in three cases; the use of explosive devices placed or attached under the victims' vehicles in three cases; and the placement of explosive devices in public locations in eight cases.

65. Looking at the cases from the point of view of their possible underlying criminal intent leads to similar conclusions: eight attacks appeared to have no specific individual targets and made use of bombs placed in public places at hours intended to minimize the casualty rate; and six attacks did have specific individual targets but were designed to avoid creating a large number of additional victims. The specifically targeted individuals were either politicians or influential journalists.

66. Finally, the Commission is considering a number of different case hypotheses on the basis of the chronological order of the attacks. Two such hypotheses are: (a) that the 14 attacks could have been planned as five separate phases, with the intent not only to eliminate specifically identified persons but also to create widespread fear and anxiety among elements of the population by targeting public locations; (b) alternatively, the attacks could be divided into two clusters with different perpetrators — one cluster of eight bombs in public places and one cluster of six bombs targeting specific individuals. Motives and reasons for the attacks may differ significantly, depending on the hypothesis adopted.

1. The eight bombs in public locations

67. The similarities among the eight attacks in public locations are evident. Preliminary analysis suggests that the attacks were executed by the same perpetrators, using the same modus operandi and with the same criminal intent. The first five attacks occurred within an approximate six-week period in 2005: New Jdeidh on Sunday, 19 March; Kaslik on Wednesday, 23 March; Bouchria on Sunday, 26 March; Broumana on Friday, 1 April; and Jounieh on Friday, 6 May. The latter three attacks occurred in Ashrafieh (Monot Street) on Friday, 22 July; Zalka on Monday, 22 August; and again in Ashrafieh (Naoum Libki Street) on Friday, 16 September. All locations are situated in predominantly Christian neighbourhoods.

68. Also, the time of each attack was similar in that they were executed at hours of the day when the location where each bomb exploded was less populated. The timing of the attacks was as follows: New Jdeidh, 0032 hours; Kaslik, 0116 hours; Bouchria, 2113 hours; Broumana, 2143 hours; Jounieh, 2134 hours; Ashrafieh (Monot Street), approximately 2145 hours; Zalka, 2234 hours; and Ashrafieh (Naoum Libki Street), approximately 2345 hours. It appears that, in all eight cases, the explosive device was placed in a manner that would raise little attention, most likely in order to enable the perpetrator/s to escape before the device exploded.

69. The comparable modus operandi of each attack could point to a single group of perpetrators who aimed to conduct a series of sustainable repetitive attacks with a minimum of complications. The operational capability and capacity to execute such attacks is high, yet the method chosen is as simple as possible in order to achieve the aim.

70. As far as the characteristics of the explosive devices are concerned, the size of the charge, in all eight cases, ranged between 10 and 20 kg of TNT, possibly mixed with other types of high explosive. This is sufficiently small to be carried by a single person and large enough to ensure a significant impact. The devices were detonated either by using a timing device or by remote control. The combined number of fatalities caused by all eight attacks was relatively low: four people were killed and approximately 60 injured.

71. While the seriousness of those deaths and injuries should not be minimized, it should be noted that the combined minimum amount of 120 kg of explosives used in the eight attacks, if used, for example, in public places at midday, could have elicited much higher numbers of casualties but would also have carried a higher risk for the perpetrators. The choice of time and location of the eight attacks must therefore be seen as a deliberate choice by the perpetrators, offering a balance between effect, number of casualties and escape. One possible motive is the intent to spread fear among the population, destabilize the security situation and cause damage to infrastructure. The fact that no advance notice was given of any of the attacks indicates that the perpetrators accepted the probability that some individuals would be killed or injured.

2. The six targeted bombs

72. The six targeted bombs were designed to kill specifically identified politicians or journalists, without harming large numbers of additional victims. Samir Kassir, May Chidiac and Gebran Tueni were or are prominent journalists; Marwane Hamadeh and Elias El-Murr were or are government ministers; and George Hawi was the former Secretary General of the Communist Party of Lebanon. It will be necessary to carry out a detailed examination of each victim's professional, public and personal backgrounds and political and religious affiliations, as well as those of their acquaintances, friends and alleged enemies, in order to assess how, where and if the victims are linked to each other from the perspective of the perpetrators.

Linkage by motive

73. As in the Hariri investigation, it is important to consider a "layering" of the motives for these crimes. At one level, the reason for the attacks may be based on motives associated with each victim individually; thus, one or more of the attacks may not be linked to other attacks at that level of motivation. At another level, the attacks may fit into a broader scheme of intent.

74. Another linking aspect currently considered by the Commission is that of the claims of responsibility made in three of the cases — the Hariri, Kassir and Tueni attacks. A few days after the Tueni attack, a previously unknown organization, "The Fighters for the Unity and Freedom of Bilad El-Cham", claimed responsibility for his and Kassir's assassination; similarly, in the Hariri case a claim has been made by Ahmed Abu Adass on behalf of another previously unknown group, "Victory and Jihad in Bilad El-Cham". The two groups, which include the same name[1] in their

[1] While "Bilad El-Cham" literally translated means "the land of Syria", it is widely understood as referring to "Greater Syria".

titles, may be two independently operating terrorist groups or may be linked to each other. It may also be the case that the two groups existed neither before the attacks nor thereafter.

Linkage by modus operandi

Three under-vehicle devices

75. Linking the attacks from a modus operandi perspective, the three specifically targeted persons who appear to have had no personal protection arrangements — Samir Kassir, George Hawi and May Chidiac — each had explosive devices placed underneath their cars. The operational capability and capacity to execute such attacks is high, yet the method chosen is simplified to maximize the chances of success with a minimum of complications. Each of the three attacks demonstrates the specific targeting of the individual, suggesting that likely prior surveillance was carried out to establish the level of personal security arrangements and personal habits, including the relevant vehicle and seat for the placement of the explosive device.

76. In the Kassir case, the bomb was placed directly under the driver's seat, either on the ground or attached to the vehicle. At the time of detonation, Mr. Kassir was inside his car, in the driver's seat, and he died as a result of the blast. In the case of Mr. Hawi, he was sitting in the passenger seat beside his driver; the detonation occurred almost 300 m after he had been driven away from his home. The blast caused Mr. Hawi's immediate death and slightly injured the driver of the vehicle. In the Chidiac case, the bomb was placed under the chassis of the vehicle, attached by magnets directly under the driver's seat. The detonation occurred just after Ms. Chidiac had gotten into her vehicle. As a result, the victim sustained serious injuries; further harm was prevented by the strong frame of the vehicle. It is likely that all three bombs were detonated by remote control.

77. Estimates of the magnitude and types of the explosive charges used in all three cases range from 500 g to 2 kg of either RDX plastic explosive or a mixture of TNT and RDX. In at least two instances and possibly all three, it appears that the bombs were attached to the undersides of the vehicles by magnets.

Three car bomb devices

78. In the cases of the other three specifically targeted persons — Marwane Hamadeh, Elias El-Murr and Gebran Tueni — bombs had been placed in cars parked along the route taken on the day of the attack. It appears that all three had some form of personal security arrangements. The operational capability and capacity required to execute these attacks is higher than in the three previously discussed cases. In particular, they required better intelligence and more complex reconnaissance and surveillance coverage to maintain the highest chances of success.

79. The attack on Mr. Tueni demonstrates this approach well. It is possible that the perpetrators had conducted their reconnaissance and surveillance some weeks before his killing and had already prepared the bomb and vehicle in anticipation of an earlier attack. However, Mr. Tueni left the country. He had been in and out of the country more than once over the previous months, sometimes staying away for

weeks at a time. It is estimated that the perpetrators waited for timely information of his return to execute successfully their pre-planned operation within 14 hours.

80. On the day of the attack, Mr. Tueni, his driver and a security escort had left home in Mr. Tueni's vehicle, taking a well-known short-cut, when they passed by the vehicle carrying the bomb. The latter was parked on the right-hand side of the road when the detonation occurred. The vehicle bomb contained approximately 35 kg of TNT and was most likely ignited by remote control. As a result of the blast, Mr. Tueni's vehicle was blown from the road into a ditch further down the hillside; three persons died and six others were injured.

81. In the case of Mr. Hamadeh, the explosive device was placed between the back seat and the trunk of the vehicle carrying the bomb, positioned in a way to direct the blast towards Mr. Hamadeh's Mercedes Benz. At the time of detonation, the two vehicles were approximately 1 m apart. The blast caused the immediate death of Mr. Hamadeh's escort, while Mr. Hamadeh and his driver sustained serious injuries. It should be noted that the escort had been sitting in the back seat of the Mercedes Benz, the seat it could be assumed Mr. Hamadeh would occupy. It is likely that a remote control device was used to trigger the detonation. The bomb is believed to have weighed approximately 6 kg, and was made of RDX, the approximate equivalent of 10 kg of TNT.

82. Mr. El-Murr, former Minister of Interior and current Minister of Defence, had four cars to choose from and used a different one every day. On the day of the attack, he left home in a 4x4 vehicle. Mr. El-Murr was driving his car, accompanied by an officer and a driver. The officer was sitting in the passenger seat next to the driver while the driver was sitting behind the actual driver's seat. When they passed by the parked vehicle carrying the bomb in the Naccache area, the device detonated and killed an unrelated person driving by the scene at that time while Mr. El-Murr and his passengers were injured. It appears that the explosive device contained 40 kg of TNT, was placed in the trunk of the vehicle and was detonated by a remote control device.

3. Preliminary conclusions

83. The Commission has reached the preliminary conclusion that the 14 cases were not commissioned and executed by 14 disparate and unconnected persons or groups with an equal number of separate motives. Analytically, the cases can be linked in a number of different ways and from varying perspectives, notably their similarities in the modus operandi and their possible intent. Evidentially, however, none of the cases is developed to an extent that would allow the identification and linking of perpetrators.

84. In the eight explosion cases in public locations, both witnesses and in some cases suspects have been interviewed. To date, no charges have been filed and no arrests have been made. Very few leads have been established that would allow further development of the cases. Hence, at this stage, it appears that the investigation in each of the cases has come to a virtual halt, pending the quest of the investigative judge for new information that would reactivate the cases.

85. In the six targeted bombing cases, a number of useful leads exist that could be followed up forensically, technically and through further investigations. At this

stage, further evidential development is awaited. No suspects have been arrested or charged for the crimes.

86. Similarly, no clear linkages between the 14 cases and the Hariri investigation have yet been identified. The Commission is performing comparative analyses with the seismological data from the Hariri case, and will utilize the findings of the scaling experiments of the Hariri case to evaluate the quantities of explosives used in the 14 cases. It has also interviewed some individuals with alleged linkages to the Hariri case.

87. Further coordinated investigative work and additional capacities are required to elicit such evidentiary links. The Commission will pursue its examination of the modus operandi used in each case and of the forensic, political, religious, geographic and personal aspects of the crimes, from the perspective of both victims and perpetrators. In addition, communications traffic is being scrutinized for linkages.

B. Strengthening the investigations of the 14 cases

88. As indicated earlier, while different in their individual stages of investigation, at this point in time the investigation of all 14 cases by the Lebanese authorities is lacking significant forward momentum. This is due to a number of factors, including lack of forensic capacity to collect and analyse evidence from the scenes of crime and lack of horizontal linking and forensic analysis. Since most of these are structural and institutional factors, the Commission has little reason to believe that this status will change in the foreseeable future. It seems unlikely that progress, including possible arrests, can be achieved without significant external assistance to the Lebanese authorities, serving as a catalyst for providing investigative capacity, coordinating capability and technical assistance.

89. In addition, the Commission believes that the investigative development of the cases has suffered a negative impact from the tangible lack of operational confidence between different Lebanese law enforcement agencies, the reality of active internal rivalries slowing or stopping progress, the fragmented responsibilities of differing Lebanese agencies for different aspects of the cases, the limited sharing of information and ideas, and even concerns of whether to move forward with the cases as a result of internal and external factors. In particular, both the role and confidence of the investigating judges in each case have suffered from this fragmentation.

90. The Commission has received copies of the case files from each investigating judge, and is currently analysing each file individually and collectively to ascertain the evidentiary status of each case and develop a menu of next investigative steps. It has also begun a comprehensive communications analysis project. In order to assist the Lebanese authorities more effectively, the Commission has allocated a multidisciplinary team of five full-time staff members to this task.

91. Given the significance of the 14 cases and their potential importance to the Hariri investigation, however, the Commission is of the view that a more concerted and robust effort is needed to advance the investigation of the 14 cases; and while increased and coordinated international assistance is certainly necessary to

strengthen the capacities of the Lebanese investigative authorities, the Commission believes that it could contribute considerably to the outcome of these investigations.

92. For example, where it deems appropriate, the Commission could undertake concrete investigative steps, such as interviewing witnesses, victims or suspects. This would support the judicial and investigative bodies in the 14 cases, assist in breaking the current status quo of each of the cases and allow for the development of horizontal linkages between the cases. While the Commission is aware of the fact that such proactive involvement in the investigation of the 14 cases might have considerable resource and time implications, it deems it appropriate in the interest of justice for all victims of the series of bombings in 2004-2005 and for the strengthening of the Lebanese judicial system.

IV. External cooperation

A. Interaction with the Lebanese authorities

93. The Commission is continuing to interact closely with the Lebanese authorities on all aspects of practical or legal relevance to the investigation. In particular, the commitment displayed by the Prosecutor General of Lebanon and his office, as well as the investigating judge assigned to the Hariri investigation, were critical to the progress made during the reporting period. The Commission has also met several times with the Minister of Justice and has enhanced its interaction with different branches of the Lebanese legal and law enforcement systems, including the President and members of the Bar Association.

94. Also, as part of the Commission's provision of technical assistance to the Lebanese authorities, regular meetings were held with the military judges and the investigating judges in charge of the different cases, discussing the progress of each case, their possible links to each other and various other matters related to the provision of technical assistance.

95. The regular interaction and exchange of information between the Commission and the Lebanese authorities have been crucial in moving the investigation forward. The Commission has continued to share with the Lebanese judicial authorities most documentary, testimonial and physical information and evidence obtained in the course of the investigation. Naturally, any such information-sharing is subject to the requirement to protect the confidentiality and sensitive nature of certain information obtained.

96. The ongoing final exploitation of the crime scene is another example of the close and mutually reinforcing nature of cooperation between the Commission and the Lebanese authorities. Through the Prosecutor General and his office, the Lebanese authorities have provided and coordinated extensive forensic, security, logistics and other support to the forensic work of the Commission. With the possible establishment of a tribunal of an international character, this close and effective interaction will become even more essential, notably to ensure that the investigative results of both the Commission and the Lebanese authorities will comply with the requirements of future judicial proceedings.

B. International cooperation

97. Obtaining the cooperation of Member States in technical, judicial and legal matters remains a crucial aspect in helping the Commission fulfil its mandate. Security Council resolutions 1595 (2005), 1636 (2005) and 1644 (2005) oblige Member States to fully cooperate with the Commission. As the investigation has progressed, the Commission has submitted over the past months an increasing number of specific requests to different Member States, seeking their assistance in obtaining information, documents or facilitating witness interviews, as well as in providing technical assistance and expertise to different investigation projects.

1. Cooperation with the Syrian Arab Republic

98. The Syrian Arab Republic is required to cooperate fully with the Commission. This is specifically mandated by the Security Council in its resolutions 1595 (2005), 1636 (2005) and 1644 (2005), adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. As indicated in its report to the Security Council dated 14 March 2006 (see S/2006/161), the Commission and the Syrian Arab Republic have reached a common understanding on the legal framework and certain practical modalities for cooperation. To facilitate cooperation, regular working-level meetings were held between senior representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic and the Commission in both Beirut and Damascus.

Meetings with the President and Vice-President of the Syrian Arab Republic

99. As noted in its previous report, the Commission and the Syrian authorities reached a general understanding to hold meetings in the course of April 2006 with both the President and Vice-President of the Syrian Arab Republic. The Commissioner met with the President and Vice-President of the Syrian Arab Republic in Damascus on 25 April 2006.

100. The Commissioner raised a number of specific questions related to the regional political and security context before and after the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Hariri, the reporting mechanisms to the President and Vice-President of the Syrian Arab Republic on the situation in Lebanon prior to the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon on 26 April 2005 and the interaction between Syrian and Lebanese authorities during that period, including the professional and personal relations between the Syrian President and Vice-President and other senior Syrian officials with former Prime Minister Hariri. Both the President and the Vice-President provided answers useful to the investigation. The Commission established a verbatim record of each meeting.

Other requests for assistance

Requests for information and documents

101. During the reporting period, the Commission submitted 16 formal requests for assistance to the Syrian Arab Republic, in which it requested that the Syrian Arab Republic provide, within a stipulated time frame, specific and detailed information of relevance to the Commission's investigation, including information and documents pertaining to the Syrian military and civilian intelligence apparatus dealing with Lebanese matters; specific information about certain Syrian citizens;

and information and statements obtained from Syrian citizens in the course of investigations conducted by Syrian authorities. Three requests were submitted as a result of the meeting between the Commissioner and the President of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Requests for interviews with Syrian witnesses

102. The Commission has also requested the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to assist by facilitating witness interviews of Syrian citizens in the Syrian Arab Republic. To date, the Commission has conducted interviews of six witnesses in the Syrian Arab Republic, arranged as and when requested. The Commission is currently examining the depth and validity of responses provided in the interviews of Government officials, and to that end will undertake corroborative interviews in the near future.

Evaluation of responses to Commission requests

103. The level of assistance provided by the Syrian Arab Republic during the reporting period is generally satisfactory. The Syrian Arab Republic has responded to all of the Commission's requests in a timely manner and in some instances comprehensive responses were provided.

104. In order to assist the investigation, the full and unconditional cooperation of the Syrian Arab Republic with the Commission remains crucial. On the basis of information received, further requests will be formulated and addressed to the Syrian Arab Republic. In all its meetings with Syrian officials, the Commission received assurances of the intention of the Syrian Arab Republic to comply fully with all its requests and to support the Commission's pursuit of those who killed former Prime Minister Hariri. Syrian officials have also offered to actively cooperate with and assist the Commission by making available information in their possession which may be relevant to the investigation. The Commission will continue to request full cooperation from Syrian authorities, including in collecting documents, seeking specific information and facilitating the interviews of Syrian citizens.

2. Cooperation with other Member States

105. Despite having strengthened its own capacities and in the light of the complexity of some of the investigative leads, the Commission requires the active external support of Member States on technical and judicial matters. The employment of all measures necessary to ensure the expeditious implementation of the Commission's requests for assistance is therefore of crucial importance.

106. During the reporting period, there has been a substantial increase in the number of requests for assistance submitted to Member States. Since 15 March 2006, a total of 32 formal requests for assistance have been sent to 13 different Member States, not including requests to the Syrian Arab Republic and interaction with the Lebanese authorities. Generally, Member States have responded positively to such requests and supported the Commission's work, including by providing forensic technical assistance, technological support, tracking of telephone communications, resource capacity and analysis.

3. Management and monitoring of requests

107. During the reporting period, the Commission further refined its internal procedure and policy for the preparation and management of requests for assistance sent to Member States and other entities. These newly adopted procedures are consistent with the procedures applied by international judicial institutions. Requests for assistance addressed to Member States have been standardized and the Commission has developed a uniform and systematic approach to drafting such requests. A specific database has been established to ensure that all the requests and responses received may be adequately recorded and any appropriate follow-up initiated, and that the Commission may assess the cooperation that it receives.

V. Organizational support

A. Internal procedure

108. The Commission's further consolidation is also reflected in the adoption of its own internal working procedure, as directed by the Security Council in its resolution 1595 (2005). This procedure aims to ensure uniformity in the work of the Commission, as well as the respect of minimum professional standards. It regulates the principal aspects of investigative work, such as interviews.

109. The internal working procedure sets out the standard operating procedures applicable to the different investigative and managerial aspects of the Commission's work. The investigative matters regulated include the modalities of interviews of witnesses and suspects; the treatment of sensitive sources; and the management of forensic exhibits and evidence. Managerial issues encompass a code of conduct and interpretation and translation standards. In addition, the internal procedure standardizes the relations of the Commission with Member States and their judicial authorities, in particular regarding requests for assistance.

110. In addition, the Commission is currently reviewing the possibility of developing a witness protection programme. To that end, it has approached Member States to explore the extent to which they may be able to offer support, including by linking the programme to their own national witness protection programmes. If such support can be obtained, the Commission would develop a set of standard operating procedures, specifying the range of protection measures that it could offer to witnesses and sensitive sources. The development of such a programme remains a priority area in order for the Commission to bolster its investigative work.

111. While based on relevant international standards, the internal procedure takes into account Lebanese law and judicial procedures, as well as the practice of the Commission since its establishment. In defining the standards to be applied, the Commission considered the procedures of international criminal jurisdictions and the minimum guarantees afforded by international criminal law and international human rights law. The internal procedure will therefore help ensure that any information collected or obtained by the Commission is admissible in future legal proceedings, notably before a tribunal of an international character.

B. Systems management

1. Information management

112. The Commission has undertaken a detailed review of its information management capabilities. As a result, it has enhanced its information management environment, including through the increased use of its document management system, the development and implementation of additional standardized procedures and a strategic vision for the medium term. Also, a data management support team has been established and is almost fully staffed. The Commission will continue to review its information management and analysis environment regularly and to reinforce it as and when required.

2. Analytical capabilities

113. The Commission has also procured a number of industry-standard analytical tools with the aim of significantly enhancing its information analysis capabilities. A framework for the full utilization of its newly established analytical capabilities has been developed and is currently being implemented, and all of the Commission's analysts now have access to the software concerned.

3. Information technology infrastructure

114. The Commission's information technology infrastructure is currently being upgraded so as to host the substantial quantity of information received from external parties; this will include approximately 5 billion records of information related to telephone communications and over 1 terabyte of electronic data. The storage and processing capabilities required to facilitate the effective and efficient use of such quantities of information are currently being procured and installed.

C. Language services

115. With a view to accommodating the significantly increased requirements generated by the intensified Hariri investigation and the expanded mandate of the Commission (technical assistance in the 14 cases), it was deemed necessary to enhance and professionalize the current translation/interpretation component of the Commission. An adequate and readily available capacity for translating primary and secondary sources and documents from Arabic into English remains a critical prerequisite for progress in the work of investigators and analysts. In line with the professional approach promoted by the Commission and in the light of the highly sensitive and confidential nature of the subject matter, it is necessary to provide for a more robust in-house language service that adheres to the standards of other international organizations and judicial institutions.

116. An in-depth review carried out by an external expert resulted in the decision to establish a dedicated language service section within the Commission, comprising a coordinator function, translators/revisers, transcribers, language assistants and interpreters. Primarily, these will have to be recruited internationally in order to minimize the exposure of national language staff to sensitive information and thereby reduce the potential security risk for this group.

117. The Commission has adopted a set of standard operating procedures for language staff and established a global roster of qualified and available staff. Both measures will serve not only the further professionalization of this component of the Commission but also the requirements of a future tribunal, possibly of an international character. They will help ensure the preparation of high-quality work products for later use in court proceedings and avoid a major backlog of translation work.

D. Administration

1. Recruitment

118. The rapid amplification of its institutional capacity continued to be one of the Commission's key tasks during the reporting period. As a priority, the high vacancy rate facing the Commission in January 2006 (some 47 per cent of posts unencumbered), especially in the investigation section (only six remaining investigators), has been reduced considerably to less than 20 per cent at present. In response to the Commissioner's call for the support of Member States in filling these vacancies, both in his Security Council presentation on 16 March 2006 and his letter of April 2006 to Member States and international judicial and law enforcement institutions (such as the International Criminal Court, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the Special Court for Sierra Leone, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the European Police Office and the International Criminal Police Organization), the Commission received a significant number of names of individuals interested in serving as investigators, analysts or forensic experts.

119. As a result, most key positions have now been filled or are under recruitment. The investigation division currently has 23 investigators and analysts. Additional candidates are being reviewed. It is therefore expected that vacancy rates will continue to decline steadily as more applications are received. A key area that remains of urgent concern is the staffing of the language service section (Arabic-English). The Commission hopes that a concerted effort, similar to the one mentioned earlier, can produce the urgently needed numbers of experienced translators/revisers, interpreters, transcribers and other language staff.

120. The Commission is grateful for the positive responses received from Member States and international institutions to date. Yet, as the investigation progresses further, the Commission reiterates the need for continuous assistance from Member States and the relevant international institutions by making qualified and specialized human resources available on a regular basis to ensure the stability and continuity of the Commission's work.

2. Budget

121. In April 2006, the Commission submitted a new budget for the second half of 2006. The budget makes provision for 179 international staff, reflecting an increase of 49 international staff. The increase is prompted by the proposed addition of 20 international language service staff, 15 safety and security staff, 10 investigations staff and four posts in administration. It is designed to meet the heightened demands originating from an intensified investigation and the additional workload generated by the technical assistance extended in the 14 cases. Consequently, in view of the

significant threat level against the Commission and its staff, the security component of the mission also needed strengthening, as did the administrative section.

3. Augmentation of premises

122. One of the major logistical challenges of the Commission is the accommodation of staff within one secure premises, both for work and private purposes. On the basis of the expert advice of the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Internal Security Forces, it is considered the best option at present to augment accommodation and office space within the premises and further improve external and internal security measures for both staff and facilities.

123. In this respect, the Government of Lebanon has offered to facilitate the work of the Commission by providing 74 prefabricated units to accommodate the growing number of staff expected to join the Commission. Installation of the units is expected to be completed by the end of July 2006. For additional office space, the Commission works closely with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon on upgrading the annex building of the hotel, including necessary structural reinforcements.

E. Security

124. The security of staff and premises continues to be a priority, particularly during movements outside the main operating base, whether for official or personal purposes. The general security environment for the Commission within Lebanon and the wider region remains volatile. The focus of the investigation increases the probability of individuals or groups attempting to execute threats against the Commission or its personnel for the purpose of disrupting its mandate.

125. In this respect, the Commission has thoroughly reviewed its existing security structure and requirements, jointly with its counterparts in the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Internal Security Forces, the Department of Safety and Security of the United Nations Secretariat, and an independent security consultant. On the basis of that review, the Commission has embarked on a course of vigorously improving security in areas previously not addressed but vital to the continued operations of the Commission, and has begun an upgrade of its facilities, equipment and personnel commensurate with the perceived level of risk and threat.

126. The security section is continually reviewing and enhancing critical measures, such as close protection, threat and risk assessments and standard operating procedures, in order to maximize safety and security for all personnel. Through a cooperative approach with the Lebanese Armed Forces, security for the main operating base remains on constant alert and provides a secure environment. The Commission's security section ensures a constant state of readiness through the development and testing of emergency contingency plans, in cooperation with the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

F. Supplemental memorandum of understanding

127. The Commission has commenced negotiations with the Government of Lebanon to further clarify its legal status through a supplemental memorandum of understanding, which would augment the original memorandum of 13 June 2005. To that end, the Commission has prepared, in consultation with the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, a draft text addressing such issues as the legal status of the Commission's premises (i.e., the main operating base) or the applicable privileges and immunities of Commission staff. The draft also stipulates that, except as provided otherwise, the agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Lebanon concerning the headquarters of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would apply mutatis mutandis to the Commission. The negotiations of the draft supplemental memorandum are expected to be concluded shortly.

VI. Conclusions

128. Considerable progress has been achieved in the Hariri investigation. The Commission has almost completed the critically important work relating to the crime scene, the Hariri convoy and associated events on the day. By the fourth quarter of 2006, it anticipates that the main projects relating to this aspect of the crime will have been completed, including, to a satisfactory evidential standard, all forensic results and final conclusions. At present, the fundamental building blocks for the investigation into the crime, in particular concerning the explosion, the container/carrier and the means of delivery, are largely understood and provide the basis for investigative progress with regard to those who perpetrated the crime. The Commission anticipates that an analysis of the results of its recent forensic activities, in particular the exploitation of the crime scene and the blast properties, will lead to the strengthening or exclusion of some of the existing case hypotheses.

129. The Commission is also continuing to accelerate its investigative tempo on a number of other fronts, concurrently. It will increase its focus on aspects of the commissioning of the crime and invest significant resources to establish linkages with the crime scene examination. The linkage and commissioning aspects of the investigation are the main priority for the immediate short term; understanding those aspects of the crime is the Commission's main objective for the foreseeable future.

130. As far as the 14 other cases are concerned, much investigative momentum has been lost due to the fragmented nature of the Lebanese law enforcement and judicial systems and a lack of expert capacity. In the light of the potential importance of the 14 other cases to the Hariri investigation and their significance for Lebanese society as a whole, the Commission believes that a more concerted and robust effort is needed to move those investigations forward. Although increased external assistance is necessary to strengthen the technical and investigative capacities of the relevant Lebanese authorities, the Commission could also conceive of a more proactive role for itself in pursuing these investigations, which could involve undertaking such concrete investigative steps as interviewing witnesses, victims or suspects, as and when deemed appropriate.

131. Much progress has been made in consolidating its organizational structure and capacity, yet the Commission still faces the key institutional challenges of securing

adequate resources in a timely manner, identifying and employing the necessary expert staff and resources on short notice, and reaching full operational capacity. As the investigative process progresses and becomes more complex, rapid and non-administrative assistance from Member States and international organizations will continue to be necessary to ensure stability and continuity in the work of the Commission. In that respect, identifying significant numbers of qualified language staff (Arabic-English) is one of its most immediate concerns.

132. In that context, the Commission welcomes the initiative of the Government of Lebanon to recommend an extension of its mandate for up to one year. This would provide a much needed sense of continuity and stability; guarantee progressive operations and planning; and offer assurances to staff. Indeed, the predictability of financial, human and other resources are the backbone of successful organizational performance. They constitute the underpinning of the systematic and methodological approach advocated in the Commission's previous report.

133. Finally, the Commission would like to take this opportunity to renew its thanks to the Government of Lebanon for its continuous substantive and logistical support. In particular, the Commission would like to express its gratitude to the many staff of the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Internal Security Forces who ensure its safety and security on a daily basis. Their dedicated service has allowed the Commission to pursue its operations without any serious disruption or effects on staff morale.

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Eleventh progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Liberia

I. Introduction

1. By its resolution 1667 (2006) of 31 March 2006, the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) until 30 September 2006 and requested me to present further recommendations for a drawdown plan for UNMIL. The present report provides an update on developments since my report of 14 March 2006 (S/2006/159) and contains adjusted recommendations for an UNMIL drawdown.

II. Major political developments

2. The most significant political development that occurred during the reporting period was the transfer of the former Liberian President, Charles Taylor, to the Special Court for Sierra Leone. On 25 March, President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria officially informed President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf that pursuant to her request, and following consultations with other African leaders, the Government of Nigeria would release Mr. Taylor to the custody of the Government of Liberia. On 28 March, the Nigerian Government announced that Mr. Taylor had absconded from his official residence in Calabar, Nigeria. Mr. Taylor was subsequently apprehended by the Nigerian authorities on the following day and was immediately flown to Monrovia. In accordance with Security Council resolution 1638 (2005) of 11 November 2005, upon his arrival Mr. Taylor was promptly apprehended and detained by UNMIL and transported to Freetown, where he was handed over to the Special Court for Sierra Leone to be tried for war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international humanitarian law in Sierra Leone.

3. Mr. Taylor's transfer to the Special Court elicited mixed reactions from the Liberian public. Some Liberians were of the view that Mr. Taylor should be tried immediately in order to send a strong message that impunity would not be tolerated. Others argued that he should have been left in Nigeria as his trial would be disruptive to the Liberian reconciliation process and could destabilize Liberia and the subregion. In an address to the nation on 30 March, President Johnson-Sirleaf expressed the hope that the Security Council would adopt a resolution that would allow Mr. Taylor's trial before the Special Court to take place in The Hague, the Netherlands. In that regard, I welcome the recent steps that have been taken by some

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Member States to ensure that the trial is transferred outside of the region. In the meantime, since Mr. Taylor's transfer to the Special Court for Sierra Leone, the political situation in Liberia has remained generally calm.

4. The Senate confirmation hearings for the President's nominees for positions in the Cabinet, Supreme Court and key parastatals continued to make progress during the reporting period. On 30 March, 21 cabinet ministers together with their deputy and assistant ministers, the chairman and commissioners of the National Elections Commission and the President's nominees for positions in several Government agencies and parastatals were sworn into office. The three branches of Government are now fully functioning.

5. However, the selection of county superintendents generated some controversy. While general satisfaction was expressed about the appointments made by the President in most of the counties, the residents of Grand Bassa, Lofa, Gbarpolu and Nimba counties claimed that they had not been consulted during the selection process and that the President had not taken their preferred choices into account. As of 1 June, all 15 county superintendents had been confirmed by the Senate.

6. Several issues, including the payment of benefits for legislators, created tensions in the relationship between the executive and the legislative branches of Government during the period under review. On 10 April, the Senate sentenced a minister and deputy minister to imprisonment for contempt of the Legislature, alleging that they had taken actions that impeded legislative functions. However, an associate justice of the Supreme Court ordered the release of the ministers the next day. Claims by some legislators that the President had failed to consult with the Legislature on the transfer of Mr. Taylor to the Special Court also added to the friction between the two branches of Government. In order to improve relations, the President decided to appoint a senior Government official to act as a liaison between the executive and legislative branches.

7. President Johnson-Sirleaf continued to address the issue of governance and corruption. On 6 March, she issued executive order 2, which extended the life of the Governance Reform Commission and redefined its mandate to include the preparation of an anti-corruption strategy and a code of conduct for public servants. By executive order 3, issued on 21 March, the President directed that all State revenues be deposited into the Central Bank of Liberia. She also authorized the relevant agencies to conduct a review of the tax exemptions on petroleum products and developed rules and guidelines for the sale of stockpiled iron ore and scrap metal. In addition, at the recommendation of international partners, the Government nullified the contract with Global Security Seals for the construction, operation and transfer of a container park at the Monrovia freeport owing to concerns over the non-competitive and non-transparent procedure by which the contract was awarded by the National Transitional Government of Liberia.

8. From February to May, President Johnson-Sirleaf undertook extensive visits to all 15 counties of Liberia. During the visits, county officials and traditional leaders informed her about the challenges facing their communities, including poor roads, inadequate health and education facilities and the lack of office and residential accommodation for Government officials. The President explained that her Government was taking steps to address these concerns, including by working closely with bilateral and multilateral partners to develop and implement recovery and development programmes.

III. Security situation

9. The overall security situation in Liberia has remained generally stable but fragile. In order to address the security concerns raised by the transfer of Mr. Taylor to the Special Court for Sierra Leone, UNMIL launched Operation Kilbride, under which security measures were taken to reassure the populace and send a message of the Mission's resolve to maintain peace and stability throughout the country and to deter potential spoilers. The security measures included increased robust patrolling within Monrovia, the deployment of the UNMIL Quick Reaction Force in border areas not covered by the UNMIL force and an increased UNMIL troop presence in Mr. Taylor's former strongholds.

10. However, there are still a number of potential threats to the stability of Liberia emanating mainly from several disaffected groups, including demobilized personnel of the Armed Forces of Liberia who are dissatisfied with the severance and pension benefits, former members of the Anti-Terrorist Unit (a militia group formed by former President Taylor) who were demanding to be included in the armed forces demobilization programme, former combatants for whom reintegration opportunities are not yet available and those who have received training but cannot find employment, as well as deactivated members of the Special Security Service and Liberian National Police.

11. The demobilized personnel of the Armed Forces of Liberia staged several violent street demonstrations. The most serious was on 25 April, when approximately 400 ex-army personnel blockaded the three roads leading to the Ministry of National Defense. They set fire to tyres and military checkpoints in the area and used sticks, stones and petrol bombs to attack UNMIL troops, as well as personnel of the Liberian Police Support Unit who were protecting the Ministry. The situation was brought under control some two hours after the arrival of UNMIL troop and formed police unit reinforcements. During the incident, three peacekeepers were injured by rocks and other projectiles, and two UNMIL vehicles were damaged.

12. In response to the incident, the Government explained the arrangements in place for the payment of severance pay and other arrears and announced measures to deal with public disorder. These measures included the arrest and prosecution of the instigators or leaders of the attack against the Ministry, UNMIL troops and Liberian citizens, as well as those who had destroyed public and private property; a ban against a demonstration by civil servants which was to have been held on 26 April; a temporary ban on the sale of petroleum in glass bottles, which were used to make the petrol bombs; and a ban on the carrying of cutlasses and machetes in the night since those weapons were frequently used to attack citizens in their homes.

13. The situation in the rubber plantations illegally occupied by former combatants also remained a potential threat to the stability of the country. Disturbances occurred on some of the plantations as a result of illicit rubber tapping, property theft, illegal possession of firearms and aggravated assault. Some former commanders of the disbanded warring factions continue to organize the illegal exploitation of the plantations and operate criminal groups there. The recommendations made by the joint Government/UNMIL task force on rubber plantations referred to in paragraph 29, are expected to address these issues.

14. Disputes over land and other property are increasing as refugees, internally displaced persons and former combatants return to their communities of origin. A recent incident in Nimba County underscored the potential for these disputes to escalate into violence that could destabilize the countryside. On 17 May, residents of Ganta took to the streets armed with sticks and machetes, following rumours that Mandingos living in Guinea intended to return to forcibly reclaim property that they had left during the civil war, from members of the Gio and Mano ethnic groups. A potentially violent situation was defused by the prompt intervention of local authorities with the support of UNMIL forces.

15. The unstable situation in Côte d'Ivoire continues to present a serious threat to the stability that now prevails in Liberia. In particular, there are concerns about the possible movement of armed groups from Côte d'Ivoire into Liberia; the possible recruitment of former Liberian combatants, including children, for operations in Côte d'Ivoire; and the possible influx of Ivorians who might seek refuge in Liberia in the event of a resumption of violence in Côte d'Ivoire. To counter these potential threats, UNMIL continued to maintain a strong security presence in border areas.

IV. Status of implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Liberia

A. Rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants

16. To date, some 66,000 out of 101,874 demobilized combatants have completed or are participating in training and education programmes funded through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-managed Trust Fund and through bilateral arrangements. Four reintegration and rehabilitation projects targeting approximately 3,000 beneficiaries were recently approved, and most of the funds required to meet the reintegration costs for the remaining 35,000 ex-combatants have been mobilized. In the meantime, President Johnson-Sirleaf has extended the mandate of the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration for another year.

17. None of the 612 ex-combatants who identified themselves as foreign nationals during the disarmament and demobilization process have been officially repatriated, although some 325 have had access to reintegration assistance in Liberia. However, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has continued to facilitate the repatriation of foreign former child combatants. To date, a total of 55 (11 Ivorian, 29 Guinean and 15 Sierra Leonean) former child combatants or children associated with the fighting forces have returned to their countries of origin. ICRC has also started to repatriate Liberian children associated with the fighting forces from neighbouring countries to Liberia.

18. The Mission continued to collect and destroy residual weapons and ammunition, which were voluntarily surrendered or discovered through search operations. During the reporting period, 48 weapons, 60 rounds of small arms ammunition, 772 pieces of unexploded ordnance and 11,461 assorted spares were collected and destroyed. In the meantime, the UNDP community arms collection and development programme continued in Lofa, Nimba and Grand Gedeh counties. The programme will be extended to River Cess, Maryland and Grand Kru counties in August 2006. So far 70 guns, 126 bayonets, 7,048 rounds of ammunition and

hundreds of assorted spares in special arms collection boxes have been collected under this programme. In addition, 13 AK-47s and six rocket launchers have been retrieved.

B. Reform of the Liberian National Police

19. Steady progress continues to be made in the reform and restructuring of the Liberian National Police. To date, 1,663 Liberian National Police personnel have graduated from the National Police Academy. The target of 3,500 fully trained police personnel is expected to be reached by July 2007. In addition, some 392 Special Security Service officers and 155 Liberian Seaport Police have graduated from the National Police Academy. Currently, 377 new police personnel are undergoing field training while another 190 are undergoing basic training. The United Nations Police, in collaboration with the Liberian National Police, recently launched a further countrywide recruitment drive to increase the pool of qualified applicants.

20. The basic and specialized training programmes of the Liberian National Police are still inadequately funded. Some $1.1 million is needed to complete basic training for 1,200 police officers, while approximately $500,000 will be required to conduct specialized training programmes. I urge donors to generously support this programme.

21. As at 1 June, 2,022 out of a targeted 2,400 Liberian National Police officers had been deactivated. The retrenchment exercise is being funded by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Earlier, 870 Special Security Service officers were deactivated with financial assistance from the United States of America.

22. The Government recently appointed a new Director of Police and several deputy and assistant directors, leading to the redeployment of several senior police officials who had been appointed under the previous administration and trained by the United Nations police. To ensure continuity of police management, UNMIL has recommended a revision of the appointment process to ensure transparency in hiring procedures and merit-based promotions.

23. The operations of the Liberian National Police continued to be seriously hampered by the lack of basic equipment, uniforms, weapons, vehicles and communication equipment. Moreover, police facilities in Monrovia and the interior of the country are in urgent need of renovation and rehabilitation. I appeal to donors to make available the additional resources needed to effectively operationalize the National Police.

C. Reform of the Armed Forces of Liberia

24. The recruitment drive for the new Armed Forces of Liberia is ongoing. As at 1 June, some 4,265 applicants had signed up to join the new army. So far, only 1,776 applicants have passed the initial screening and they will still need to undergo medical tests and a vetting process before qualifying for basic training. Engineering work to prepare firing ranges, obstacle courses and other outdoor training facilities has commenced at the proposed training site located at the former Voice of America

transmitter station in Montserrado County. In the interim, the Barclay Training Centre in central Monrovia will continue to be used for classes and accommodation. The training of the new armed forces is expected to start in July.

25. The Government of Liberia is still in the process of formulating its national security policy. A United States-funded security sector review, which was recently conducted by the RAND Corporation, has provided the Government with strategic options for the future direction and organization of the security services. The RAND report will form the basis of a national dialogue on security sector reform in the country in the coming months.

D. Restoration and consolidation of State authority

26. Some progress was made in the restoration and consolidation of State authority. As indicated above, most county Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents for Development have already been inducted and the selection of district and town commissioners is under way. The Mission and the United Nations country team have established joint county support teams to help the newly installed superintendents strengthen local coordination and set priorities for community recovery and development.

27. The Mission continued to facilitate the return of Government officials to their respective areas of responsibility. It provided transportation assistance to customs and excise and immigration and naturalization officials to enable them to monitor Government revenue collection points and border crossings. This has led to increased revenue collection and better control of cross-border traffic. Despite these positive developments, the work of many Government departments in the countryside continued to be constrained by the lack of office accommodation, logistics and qualified personnel.

28. Central Bank payment centres have been constructed in Tubmanburg, Zwedru and Voinjama, with the assistance of UNMIL quick-impact project funds. This will enable county officials stationed in those locations to more easily collect their salaries and remain at their posts. The Central Bank is currently conducting assessments in Barclayville, Greenville and Harper to determine the possibility of opening similar centres in those locations.

E. Restoration of proper management of natural resources

29. During the reporting period, the Government intensified its efforts to regain full control over the exploitation of the country's natural resources. The joint Government/United Nations task force, which was established to undertake a comprehensive assessment of Liberia's rubber plantations, including the management and exploitation of these plantations and labour and human rights conditions there, submitted its report to the President on 23 May. The report outlines the task force's findings and makes detailed recommendations aimed at halting the use of forced and child labour and illegal trafficking in raw rubber, including the repossession of illegally occupied plantations, the review of concession and management agreements and the establishment of interim management teams. The President welcomed the recommendations, emphasizing the urgency of their implementation.

and indicated that the lifespan of the task force would be extended with a follow-up mandate.

30. With the assistance of UNMIL, the Government has deployed mineral inspectors and agents to the diamond-mining areas, set up regional Kimberley Process Certification Scheme offices in six counties, and carried out surveillance and inspection activities in the principal diamond-mining areas. The Government is also setting up cooperatives for diamond miners with the support of UNDP. The United States has provided vehicles and equipment to enhance the capacity of the recently established Liberian Diamond Authority, while the De Beers diamond mining company has provided training to the Authority's personnel. On 22 May, a Kimberley Process Certification Scheme review mission visited Liberia to assess the measures taken by the Government to establish a transparent, effective and verifiable system of internal control in the diamond sector. The Mission provided logistical support to the Kimberley Process team.

31. The Forestry Reform Management Monitoring Committee, which was established by the President in February, has commenced operations. The Committee reviewed new proposals for the allocation of forest concessions and for the award of forest concessions management contracts to private companies. The new proposals provide for the strict application of the Public Procurement and Concession Act of 2005 and for the establishment of a forest strategic management plan aimed at mapping out areas for commercial logging and for community and conservation forestry.

32. The Forestry Development Authority finalized the new pit-sawing policy, which includes a comprehensive waybill system to control the movement of sawn timber and collect revenue. The Mission provided the Forestry Development Authority teams with transport and security during the conduct of their 12-day assessment of major pit-sawing areas throughout the country and is currently operating joint UNMIL/Authority checkpoints to ensure that the new interim policy is being observed. As a result of those actions, there has been a significant increase in Government revenue from forestry operations.

33. During the reporting period, the Policy Council and Board of Directors of the Environmental Protection Agency were finally constituted. This will enable the Agency, which operated without these two important bodies for three years, to more effectively carry out its mandate of ensuring the preservation and protection of the environment and natural resources of Liberia.

I. Promotion of human rights and the rule of law

1. Promotion of human rights

34. The Mission continued to monitor and promote human rights throughout the country. It also intensified activities aimed at building the capacity of Liberian human rights organizations, particularly in the areas of legal education and training for members of the legal and judicial system. Five workshops were conducted around the country for clerks of magisterial courts on court administration and procedures. In collaboration with ICRC, UNMIL facilitated two workshops on human rights protection, the Constitution, and the Rape Amendment Act for more than 90 community leaders and Chiefs in Nimba County. The Mission also

distributed copies of the Rape Amendment Act to judicial officers and police in the counties. Despite these activities, reported incidents of sexual and gender-based violence, particularly rape and abuses occurring within the context of traditional practices, have increased.

35. In its efforts to build human rights awareness, following a series of reported cases of illegal detentions, UNMIL conducted training for the police and security guards at concessions in Nimba County. It also provided training on human rights, gender issues and law enforcement to probationary police officers deployed in Bomi County. To create awareness among students of human rights issues, 36 human rights clubs have been established in schools around the country to address issues such as the Rape Amendment Act, national reconciliation and the universality of human rights and their place in democracy.

36. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which was launched on 20 February, has begun to collect information on alleged human rights abuses and atrocities linked to the country's 14 years of civil war. However, the Commission still urgently requires some $10 million for its two years of operations. So far, it has received $600,000 from UNDP for its initial three-month preparatory phase, €300,000 from the European Commission for logistics and technical assistance and $120,000 out of a total pledged amount of $260,000 from the Liberian Government. The Government has also provided the Commission with two vehicles and promised to provide office space for the Commission.

37. The Mission is supporting the Commission's public outreach programme and has made its air assets available to enable the Commission to access remote parts of the country. In collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Centre for Transitional Justice, UNMIL provided the Commissioners with training in international humanitarian law and human rights law. UNDP, with the assistance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, has compiled a study of the atrocities committed during the 14-year conflict, which will be made available to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

38. The Independent National Commission on Human Rights is still in the process of appointing its members. The Mission assisted the Commission with the dissemination of information and the distribution of nomination forms in the counties, and conducted radio programmes and public meetings on the work of the Commission with the support of local non-governmental organizations.

2. Support for the judicial system

39. The Government continued to face serious capacity constraints in its efforts to improve the administration of justice. In particular, the lack of court buildings in many counties and the dearth of qualified judicial and legal officers remained major impediments to the effective administration of justice. These inadequacies have contributed to the denial of due process and fair trials for many accused persons. Investigations are still not being conducted in a timely manner, resulting in the protracted detention of accused persons, often in overcrowded prison facilities. In addition, no further progress was made in the reconstruction of juvenile justice institutions, as county juvenile courts and rehabilitation facilities remained non-existent.

40. To address the acute shortage of qualified judicial officers, UNMIL is assisting the Government to engage the services of national prosecutorial consultants to help reduce the backlog of pending criminal cases. Furthermore, the Mission is supporting the Ministry of Justice and the Liberian National Bar Association in their bid to establish a law reform commission, which will strengthen the legal framework in Liberia. In the meantime, the rule of law task force, which was established to develop a strategy on rule of law reform, has submitted its final report to the Government. The report is expected to assist the Government in the coordination of legal and judicial reforms.

41. In April, the Chief Justice conducted a nationwide tour of the judicial circuits to assess the constraints being faced by the judicial system. During the tour, he reiterated his commitment to stamping out corruption in the judiciary and announced the establishment of a five-member judicial inquiry committee chaired by one of the associate justices.

3. Support for the corrections system

42. The Mission continued to assist the Bureau of Corrections in the Ministry of Justice to improve the conditions of correctional facilities in the country. Facilities in Monrovia, Buchanan, Kakata and Gbarnga are being refurbished with funds provided by the Governments of the United States and Norway, while correctional facilities in Zwedru and Harper are expected to be refurbished with funds provided by UNDP. The Mission's quick-impact project funds have helped to improve water and sanitation conditions at several facilities, and additional equipment to enhance the security of prison facilities has been procured. However, most facilities continue to rely heavily on the World Food Programme (WFP), ICRC and other partners for food, health care and other essential supplies.

43. Graduates of the first corrections officer training class have still not been absorbed into the civil service owing to budgetary constraints. In the meantime, preparations for the final phase of training for the second corrections officer training class have been completed. Funding is urgently needed for the deactivation of serving corrections officers who do not meet the required standards.

G. Economic governance

44. Progress was made in the implementation of the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme. Internationally recruited financial controllers for Liberian State-owned enterprises, including the National Port Authority, Roberts International Airport, the Liberia Petroleum Refining Company and the Forestry Development Authority, as well as a budget expert recruited for the Bureau of Budget, assumed their duties during the reporting period.

45. The Economic Governance Steering Committee, which oversees the Management Assistance Programme, continued to meet regularly to monitor progress in its implementation. On 3 May, the Steering Committee approved the memorandum of understanding between State-owned enterprises and commercial banks for the creation of consolidated accounts. It also approved the terms of reference for an independent review of contracts and concessions, which had been entered into earlier by the former National Transitional Government of Liberia, and the recruitment of an international lawyer to support the review process. In May, the

Government's Public Procurement and Concessions Committee published a framework to guide the contracts and concessions review process.

46. The Government is collaborating with international partners in the formulation of a national anti-corruption strategy. During the reporting period, the Government received a report prepared by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on corruption in the Transitional Government, as well as a European Commission-financed audit of the Bureau of Maritime Affairs. In an effort to better inform the public of the progress of the Management Assistance Programme, the Steering Committee's technical team has prepared an outreach and communication strategy.

47. A matrix was produced by UNDP that captures and monitors the capacity-building elements of the Programme to help ensure institutional strengthening and the proper transfer of knowledge and skills to Liberians. On 29 March, the Steering Committee requested its technical team to provide detailed action points on capacity-building within the Programme. Since that time, the team has been meeting with internationally recruited experts to discuss the capacity-building components of their work and their plans of action in order to provide specific recommendations on capacity-building.

48. With respect to broader governance issues, the European Commission published a report on the future of governance reform in Liberia. The report recommended that the Governance Reform Commission be renamed the Good Governance Commission, and that its responsibilities include the formulation of strategic policy frameworks for promoting good governance; the coordination of cross-cutting issues in good governance initiatives; and monitoring and evaluation of the impact of good governance initiatives.

49. Efforts to curb corruption and improve the transparency of public finances are already bearing fruit. The Government's first financial report, for the period from January to March 2006, indicated that revenues of $26.2 million had been received, three times the amount collected for the same period in 2005. The increase in public revenues was partially a result of improvements in the collection system. The Government has instituted better controls at the freeport in Monrovia and has established a system of pre-shipment inspections of imported goods to address the undervaluation of imports, such as rice and petroleum. The Ministry of Finance also plans to publish Government accounts and agreements on the disclosure of assets.

II. National recovery, reconstruction and development

50. Some progress was made in providing support for war-affected communities. Several communities received assistance to revive basic food production. Tools and seed rice were donated by China, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and ICRC. In addition, efforts to rehabilitate community infrastructure and repair roads were focused on areas of return and border areas. So far, more than 2,500 kilometres of mostly unpaved roads have been rehabilitated and are being regularly repaired and maintained by UNMIL engineers. The rehabilitation of feeder roads, which is being undertaken by WFP, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation, has provided short-term employment for thousands of people from the local communities. Donors are encouraged to support road construction and

rehabilitation activities as they provide short-term employment and assist in opening up previously inaccessible communities.

51. The Mission and its partners continued to support the Government's efforts to implement its 150-day action plan, set up to address the most immediate basic needs of the population, such as the partial restoration of electricity, the repair of roads and the rehabilitation of Government infrastructure.

52. The Liberia Reconstruction and Development Committee, established to coordinate the country's reconstruction and development activities and to oversee the execution of key deliverables in the short and long term, is chaired by the President, who oversees four separate subcommittees, focusing on security, economic revitalization, basic services and infrastructure, and the rule of law and good governance. During the reporting period, the Committee met on four occasions to review the progress being made on the Government's 150-day action plan, the finalization of the results-focused transitional framework and preparations for the interim poverty reduction strategy paper, among other issues. The strategy paper, which is expected to follow on from the Government's 150-day action plan and which will form the basis for the country's medium-term development agenda, will be presented to international partners later this year.

V. Humanitarian activities

53. During the reporting period, the humanitarian situation in the country continued to improve. On 20 April, the resettlement of internally displaced persons was completed and all the remaining camps for internally displaced persons were formally closed. Since the start of the resettlement process in November 2004, some 312,015 internally displaced persons have been assisted to return to their places of origin. However, a small number of internally displaced persons are still living by choice in and around the camps. In addition, UNHCR continued to promote the voluntary repatriation of Liberian refugees from the subregion. As at 18 May, some 66,059 refugees had returned to their places of origin with the assistance of UNHCR, while an estimated 200,000 had returned spontaneously since the end of fighting in July 2003. Some 169,525 registered refugees remain in various countries in West Africa.

54. There are a number of humanitarian challenges that must be resolved in the communities of return. These include the provision of health care, water and sanitation, education, shelter, food and livelihood opportunities. The future peace and stability of the country is inextricably linked to the successful revitalization of these communities. The United Nations Consolidated Appeal for Liberia is seeking $120 million to address some of the most basic needs of vulnerable Liberians in 2006. As at 22 May, pledges had been received for only 25 per cent of the required funds. I encourage members of the international community to contribute generously to this appeal.

VI. Gender

55. The Mission's Gender Unit and Gender Task Force continued to mainstream gender activities in all aspects of its work. The Unit provided training in the areas of

gender mainstreaming, promotion of women's rights and the elimination of domestic violence and gender-related sexual violence to Government entities, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and gender-based violence committees throughout the country. It also assisted in the resuscitation of the women's non-governmental organization secretariat of Liberia.

VII. HIV/AIDS

56. The office of the HIV/AIDS policy adviser continued to collaborate with the Mission's integrated mission training cell to carry out HIV/AIDS awareness-raising, training and sensitization as part of the induction training for United Nations military observers, staff officers, police and civilian peacekeepers. In collaboration with the Mission's public information component, the HIV/AIDS policy adviser's office participated in public awareness programmes on HIV/AIDS, living positively with HIV and health/treatment-seeking behaviour. More than 10,000 people attended the programmes. The office also participated in an UNMIL radio live phone-in programme discussing voluntary counselling and testing and HIV/AIDS stigmatization, denial and discrimination. The office has carried out programmes in conjunction with UNICEF, the national HIV/AIDS control programme and the Foundation for International Dignity. It also assisted the Government in developing its second HIV/AIDS national strategic plan, for the period from 2004 to 2007.

VIII. Personnel conduct and discipline

57. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 57/306 of 15 April 2003, the Conduct and Discipline Team, which was set up in UNMIL in October 2005, continued to focus its efforts on maintaining data on investigations into sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as related offences by humanitarian and peacekeeping personnel, recording all relevant action taken thereon, disseminating United Nations policies, procedures and guidelines throughout the Mission area, and assisting with the development of strategies to prevent, identify, report and respond effectively to all categories of misconduct through training and awareness-raising. The Team also maintains a 24-hour telephone hotline, which was set up to receive reports related to misconduct by UNMIL personnel.

58. In collaboration with relevant UNMIL components, the Team is setting up a sexual assault and rape rapid response team to assist victims of assault. In addition, it is developing a comprehensive database aimed at facilitating the systematic monitoring and reporting of misconduct cases. In the meantime, the Team has initiated a training programme in collaboration with the United Nations country team and the Mission's integrated training cell in an effort to standardize training on the implementation of United Nations standards for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse for all categories of United Nations personnel.

59. Following the publication of the report entitled "From Camp to Community: Liberia Study on Exploitation of Children" by Save the Children UK on 8 May, UNMIL took the opportunity to reiterate the zero-tolerance policy of the United Nations on sexual exploitation and abuse to all UNMIL personnel. The report contains no specific cases but alleges that sexual exploitation by peacekeepers, international and national humanitarian workers and civil servants has continued in

Liberia. In response to the report, UNMIL reviewed the effectiveness of the various measures that it has in place to prevent and sanction sexual exploitation and abuse. My Special Representative also met with President Johnson-Sirleaf to discuss the contents of the Save the Children UK report. It was subsequently agreed that the Government and the United Nations would spearhead a national awareness-raising and prevention campaign.

60. In 2005, 45 cases related to sexual exploitation and abuse involving UNMIL personnel were investigated and, so far this year, a total of 18 cases have been or are being investigated.

IX. Public information

61. Apart from previously reported activities, the public information component supported other priority programmes of the Mission and United Nations agencies, including nationwide awareness campaigns on Lassa fever, avian flu, the return of internally displaced persons to their places of origin and the Rape Amendment Act. The Mission's radio station increased its programming on the activities of the Government with the introduction of a new programme called "Capitol Report", which covers the activities of the three branches of Government, and "Girl Power", an educational magazine for young women. In addition, the public information component participated in a consultative meeting of stakeholders to finalize bills on freedom of information and on establishing an independent media commission. It also facilitated a round-table discussion on the performance of the media during the 2005 elections.

X. Recommendations for the drawdown of the Mission

A. Military component

62. As at 1 June, UNMIL troop strength stood at 14,794 (see annex). In my last report (S/2006/159), I indicated that it would be appropriate to adjust the Mission's military component by withdrawing one infantry battalion in mid-2006 and another infantry battalion early in 2007. I also indicated that the troop strength of UNMIL would be reduced by 250 by 31 March, in order to bring it within the troop strength of 15,000, in keeping with Security Council resolution 1626 (2005) of 19 September 2005. In addition, I proposed that further adjustments would continue to be considered as the situation permits, without compromising the security of Liberia or the effectiveness of United Nations operations in the country.

63. Accordingly, based on the planned rotations, incoming troops from the Namibian contingent were reduced by 250 personnel in March. Moreover, given the relative stability that has prevailed since the inauguration of the new Government and based on the detailed assessment already provided in my last report, which remains valid, the first battalion referred to above will be withdrawn during the latter part of 2006, subject to the continued stability of the security situation in the country. The details of the adjustment will be provided in my next report. As proposed in my March 2006 report, further adjustments, including the withdrawal of a second infantry battalion early in 2007, will be considered as the situation permits, without compromising the security of Liberia.

64. The infantry company from the Nigerian contingent, which was temporarily redeployed to Côte d'Ivoire on 16 February in compliance with Security Council resolution 1657 (2006), returned to UNMIL on 6 May. Given the volatile security situation in western Côte d'Ivoire, UNMIL has strengthened its troop deployment in the eastern part of Liberia and its Quick Reaction Force is conducting long-range patrols utilizing air, sea and land assets. In addition, the Mission has deployed troops to Webo, a strategic crossing point into Côte d'Ivoire. Border patrols have also been intensified to effectively monitor cross-border activities, including the possible movement of natural resources into Guinea and Sierra Leone.

65. The Mission continues to provide security support to the Special Court for Sierra Leone in accordance with Security Council resolution 1626 (2005). Given the high-profile nature of the detainees at the Special Court, security protection at the Court's premises remains a top priority. The 250-strong military unit from Mongolia is responsible for guarding the Special Court compound, providing convoy protection for detainees when they are moved outside the compound and, should it become necessary, assisting with the evacuation of Special Court officials and detainees to a safe location supported by the UNMIL Quick Reaction Force. The guard force is well equipped and receives some logistical support from the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone.

B. Police component

66. As at 1 June, the Mission's police strength stood at 1,051 out of an authorized ceiling of 1,115, including 4 United Nations police immigration officers, 480 officers in four formed police units and 18 corrections officers. The newly arrived United Nations police immigration officers have been deployed to the Liberian Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization headquarters and to Roberts International Airport to assist with the security sector restructuring exercise. As priorities have shifted to institutional capacity-building and operations support, the Mission is now placing emphasis on recruiting specialist United Nations police personnel in areas such as administration, police budgeting, forensics and Interpol operations.

67. In view of the ongoing police reform and restructuring programme and the critical role played by UNMIL formed police units in supporting the efforts of the Liberian National Police to address the recurrent violent demonstrations, the prevailing situation does not permit a drawdown of the Missions' police component at this stage. However, the strength of the police component will continue to be reviewed as the reform and training programme progresses and further recommendations will be provided in my future reports as appropriate.

68. In the meantime, the deployment of an additional formed police unit, as recommended in my March report, would greatly enhance the capacity of UNMIL to respond effectively and promptly to situations of public unrest that could arise from the various retrenchment exercises currently under way, as well as the Government reform initiatives, the increase in localized criminal activities and the planned reduction in the military component later in the year. It would also provide an opportunity for the Liberian Police Support Unit to acquire the practical experience it requires to eventually take over those responsibilities from UNMIL.

XI. Benchmarks

69. In implementing the adjustments and drawdown of UNMIL proposed in paragraph 63, the paramount consideration will be to avoid the creation of a security vacuum in the country, which would place the progress made in stabilizing the country at risk. Consequently, progress in reforming and restructuring the Liberian National Police and the Armed Forces of Liberia, as well as other security agencies, will constitute the key security benchmark that should determine the pace of the drawdown process.

70. Other broad benchmarks include completing the reintegration of former combatants, facilitating political and ethnic reconciliation, consolidating State authority throughout the country and restoring effective Government control over the country's natural and mineral resources. The Mission's responsibilities regarding the security protection of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, the prevailing regional security conditions and socio-economic indicators of progress, including the provision of quick and effective deliverables, and the establishment of a long-term recovery programme will also need to be taken into account in conjunction with the above benchmarks in determining how the drawdown could be effected. A more detailed elaboration of these benchmarks will be provided in my subsequent reports to the Council.

XII. Observations

71. The progress made in the short time since the Government of President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf assumed office is very encouraging. The resettlement of internally displaced persons has been completed, more Liberian refugees are returning home, implementation of the Governance and Economic Assistance Programme is making progress, measures to fight corruption are already yielding increased, albeit still small revenues for the State, efforts to meet the goals set out in the Government's 150-day action plan are ongoing and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has begun its work. In addition, the bold decision concerning the transfer of Charles Taylor to the Special Court for Sierra Leone was a significant development, which sent a strong message to other warlords in the region.

72. The country's relative stability has allowed increased freedom of movement, facilitated the return of refugees and internally displaced persons and aided the gradual resurgence of economic activity. It has also permitted the Government to concentrate on its national reform agenda. However, there is a continuing need to carefully manage the internal threats to stability in the country. The serious disturbances created by former personnel of the Armed Forces of Liberia on 25 April, and by residents of Nimba County on 17 May, underline the fragility of peace in the country. The relative stability continues to be overwhelmingly anchored on the presence of UNMIL, as Liberia does not yet have its own army and the new police force is still in the formative stages. The continued presence of UNMIL, therefore, will remain indispensable to the consolidation of peace in the country. I would like to reiterate my strong recommendation for the deployment of an additional formed police unit for the reasons outlined in paragraph 68.

73. The reintegration of ex-combatants is a critical component of the peace process that must be completed as soon as possible. In order to ensure peace and

stability in Liberia and in the wider subregion, these former combatants must be fully reintegrated and given the opportunity of viable employment. At the same time, there is also an urgent need to provide youth and the unskilled labour force with employment opportunities in the short to medium term. Pending the development of viable long-term national programmes, public works programmes will be needed to address this pressing issue. Such programmes can have an immediate and productive impact, especially when used to rehabilitate infrastructure and roads, as well as for agricultural projects. I therefore strongly encourage donors to generously assist in the creation of public works programmes.

74. It is extremely satisfying to note that thousands of Liberians who were displaced by the war are returning home to rebuild their communities. However, the precarious social situation in many areas of the country, some of which are only now becoming easily accessible to humanitarian agencies, remains a matter of concern. I therefore encourage donors to maintain their support for humanitarian action in areas where people are returning and to generously support the 2006 Consolidated Appeal for Liberia.

75. The steps taken by the Government to reform the judiciary and enhance the rule of law are encouraging. However, much more needs to be done to address the long-standing structural challenges facing the justice sector in the country. This will require a comprehensive approach and far-reaching reforms, including a major overhaul of the corrections system, which should be carried out as a matter of urgency to alleviate unnecessary suffering of prisoners.

76. Although the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has begun, it remains a source of concern that it is still not adequately funded. The Commission will need urgent financial assistance to perform its work effectively and within the stipulated time frame. While appealing for donor support, I also urge the Government of Liberia to provide the funds that it has pledged to the Commission.

77. The friction that emerged between the legislative and executive branches of Government remains a source of concern. The tension between these two branches must not be allowed to disrupt the stability and progress achieved to date. While respecting the separation of powers, the three branches of Government must work together to ensure that good governance is maintained in the country. Liberia has gone through much turbulence and the people of Liberia deserve peace, stability and security to rebuild their lives. I appeal therefore to the leadership of all three branches of Government to constructively engage with each other for the betterment of Liberia and its people.

78. The situation in the subregion, particularly in Côte d'Ivoire, remains fragile. Without stability in that country it will be difficult to safeguard the achievements in Liberia. It is therefore important for the international community to support the promising dialogue that has recently been opened among the conflicting parties and encourage them to sustain the momentum. I commend ECOWAS and the African Union for their initiatives and encourage them to continue resolutely to support the process of dialogue.

79. During this period of national recovery, peace consolidation and reconciliation, non-governmental organizations will continue to play a key role, in collaboration with the Government, the donors and United Nations agencies, in providing a very broad range of essential services. National non-governmental

organizations have served as important knowledge brokers, bringing with them local know-how and institutional memory, while international non-governmental organizations bring expertise and experience in areas such as the return and protection of vulnerable populations, ex-combatant training programmes and infrastructure rehabilitation projects. It is hoped that in the coming months, non-governmental organizations and donors will join us in refocusing attention on community-based recovery efforts, especially in those areas where significant numbers of returnees are placing additional strain on already limited resources.

80. In conclusion, I would like to commend the people and Government of Liberia, my Special Representative and all UNMIL military and civilian personnel for the progress accomplished during the reporting period. I would also like to thank all troop- and police-contributing countries, ECOWAS, the African Union, the International Contact Group on the Mano River Basin, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, humanitarian organizations, multilateral and bilateral donors and international and local non-governmental organizations for their unwavering support for the peace process in Liberia.

Annex

United Nations Mission in Liberia: military and civilian police strength as at 1 June 2006

Country	Military				Police
	Military observers	Staff officers	Troops	Total	Civilian police
Argentina					
Bangladesh	17	11	1 188	1 216	19
Benin	4			4	
Bolivia	3	1		4	
Bosnia and Herzegovina					19
Brazil		1		1	
Bulgaria	1			1	
China	5	6	558	571	25
Croatia	3	1		4	
Czech Republic	3			3	9
Denmark	2			2	
Ecuador	3	1		4	
El Salvador	1			1	2
Ethiopia	16	8	2 549	2 573	
Egypt	8			8	
Fiji					
Finland		2		2	
France		1		1	
Gambia	3			3	30
Germany			1	1	5
Ghana	12	6	849	867	40
Indonesia	3			3	
Ireland		1	126	127	
Jamaica					12
Jordan	7	8	118	133	140
Kenya	3	4		7	25
Kyrgyzstan	4			4	1
Malawi		2		2	18
Mali	4	1		5	
Mongolia		2	248	250	
Malaysia	6	0		6	
Namibia	3	4	609	616	8
Nepal	3	2	40	45	250
Niger	3			3	

Country	Military observers	Staff officers	Troops	Total	Police (including guard units)
Nigeria	14	19	1 989	1 972	166
Norway					13
Pakistan	14	13	2 737	2 762	27
Paraguay	3	1		4	
Peru	3	2		5	
Philippines	3	13	163	179	29
Poland	2			2	9
Republic of Korea		2		2	
Republic of Moldova	3	1		4	
Romania	1			1	
Russian Federation	7			8	19
Rwanda					15
Serbia					19
Senegal	3	2	846	852	
Serbia and Montenegro	3			4	6
Sri Lanka					11
Sweden		3	233	236	12
Togo	2			1	
Turkey					27
Uganda					23
Ukraine	5		139	144	7
United Kingdom		1		1	
United States of America	7	8		15	28
Yemen					4
Zambia	5			1	27
Zimbabwe					27
Total	**199**	**114**	**14 481**	**14 794**	**1 051**

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Letter dated 9 June 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose herewith a letter from Hoshyar Zebari, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, regarding the Security Council review of the mandate of the multinational force and the arrangements for the Development Fund for Iraq and the International Advisory and Monitoring Board (see annex).

I would appreciate it if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Hamid **Al-Bayati**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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On 15 December 2005, the people of Iraq voted for their first constitutional Government, a Government which has now assumed office pursuant to the permanent Constitution. These developments complete the political process envisioned by the Transitional Administrative Law and Security Council resolution 1546 (2004), and constitute monumental and momentous steps in democratizing Iraq.

While great achievements have been gained by the people of Iraq in the realm of political development, the continuation of the mandate of the multinational force in Iraq remains necessary and essential for our security, through joint cooperation between the multinational force and Iraqi security forces, until such time that Iraqi forces will be able to provide security on their own.

I am aware that the mandate of the multinational force is due for review, as requested by the Prime Minister of Iraq in his letter dated 27 October 2005 (Security Council resolution 1637 (2005), annex II) and pursuant to the decision of the Security Council as set forth in the resolution.

In respect of this review, the Government of Iraq requests the continued assistance of the international community in providing security and stability in Iraq, and in preventing terrorists and money and material to support terrorism from crossing the border into Iraq. We acknowledge that Iraq faces an insurgency, including foreign elements, which uses the means and methods of terrorism in its attempt to disrupt and prevent the transition of Iraq to a pluralistic democracy, one at peace with itself and its neighbours.

The Government of Iraq, together with the multinational force, is now in the midst of the process to build up security forces so that Iraqis can assume full responsibility for Iraqi security. Members of all of the multifarious communities of Iraq have joined in this effort, and volunteers for service in Iraqi military and security forces represent a broad cross-section of the country's ethnic and religious communities.

The Government of Iraq welcomes and thanks the multinational force and participating States for their contributions to security and stability in Iraq. We express our gratitude for the role played by the multinational force under resolution 1637 (2005), particularly the partnership of the Government of Iraq and the multinational force on the full range of policy and security issues.

The Government of Iraq reiterates its gratitude for international security assistance from other sources, including the NATO training mission, the United Nations Protection Force and bilateral cooperation in training Iraqi security forces.

My Government looks forward to the day when our Iraqi forces assume full responsibility for defeating the armed insurgency in Iraq and maintain national security. Until then, the Government of Iraq welcomes the continued presence of the multinational force as Iraq continues its democratic and economic transition and reconstruction.

I am also aware that the time is ripe for a review of the mandate of the Development Fund for Iraq and the International Advisory and Monitoring Board. The Government of Iraq notes the important role played by the Fund and the board in ensuring and demonstrating that the oil resources of Iraq are being used transparently for the benefit of the Iraqi people. We recognize that the Fund and the Board play a meaningful role in confirming for donors and creditors that Iraq is managing its resources and debts responsibly to the best benefit of the Iraqi people. To that end, the Government of Iraq welcomes the continuation of the current arrangements for the Fund and the Board as extended by the Security Council in resolution 1637 (2005).

(*Signed*) Hoshyar **Zebari**
Minister for Foreign Affairs